34

TODD McFARLANE TELLS YOU HOW TO BREAK INTO COMICS

JEFF SMITH ON BONE AND DISNEY

WIZARD®

JUNE 1994
NUMBER 34
$3.95 U.S.A.
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THE GUIDE TO COMICS

THE X-MEN'S BETTER HALF.

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BUT CHAOS IS!

ALPHA
by Layton, Chang, & Ordway
Cover by Jurgens & Ordway
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WEEK 1 BETA	WEEK 2 GAMMA	WEEK 3 DELTA	WEEK 4 EPSILON
SHADOWMAN #29	BLOODSHOT #20	HARBINGER #34	SOLAR MAN OF THE ATOM #38
THE SECOND LIFE OF DOCTOR MIRAGE #11	SECRET WEAPONS #13	HARDCORE #5	STARWATCHERS #3
TUROK DINOSAUR HUNTER #16	NINJAK #8	X-O MANOWAR #33	RAI #26
SECRETS OF THE VALIANT UNIVERSE #2	archer & ARMSTRONG / ETERNAL WARRIOR #26	THE H.A.R.D. CORPS #23	MAGNUS ROBOT FIGHTER #41

VALIANT

OMEGA
by Layton, Chang, & Ordway
Cover by Jurgens & Ordway

Shipping in June & July

#1 **Shipping in August**
by Bob Hall, Don Perlin, and Gonzalo Mayo

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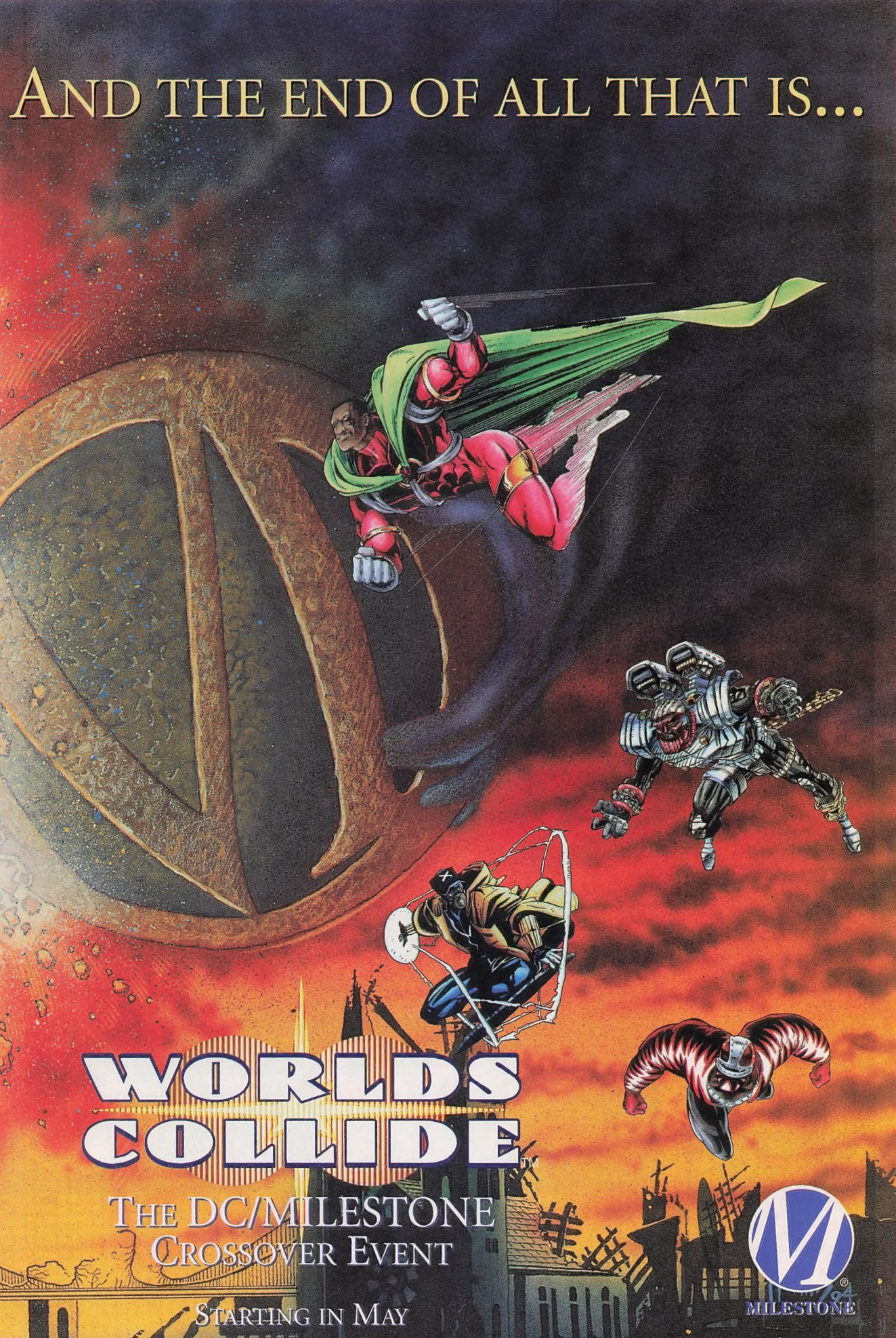
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Wizard Bowling Odyssey!
Go bowling in Jersey with Quesada! Page 57.

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Number 34
June 1994

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WIN!
CHECK OUT THESE SCREAMIN' CONTESTS:

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PSYLOCKE AND ROGUE ™ & © MARVEL ENTERTAINMENT GROUP

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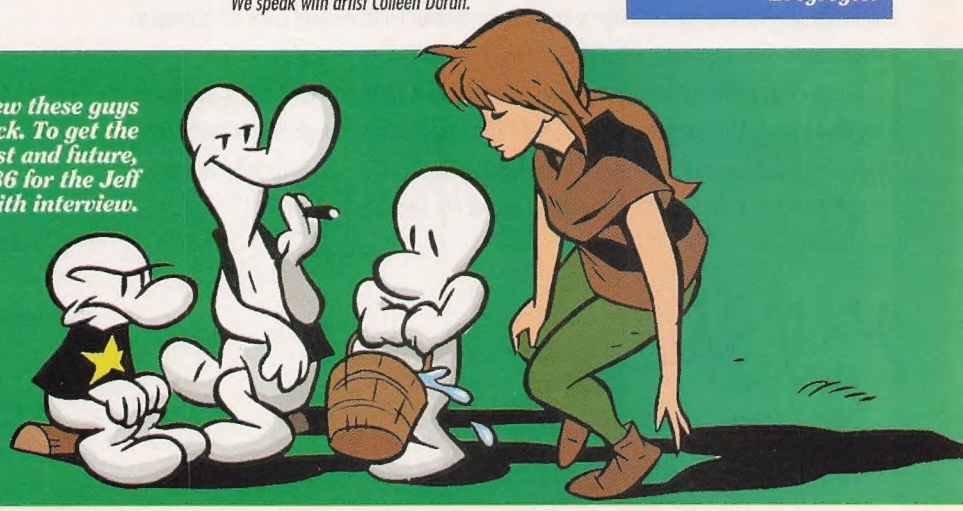
BLOODFIRE ™ & © JOSEPH A. ZYSKOWSKI

PRIME ™ & © MALIBU COMICS ENTERTAINMENT INC.

"SHA-ZAK!!" ***Turn to page 78 for the electrifying article on* Prime *artist Norm Breyfogle.***

You already knew these guys were cute as heck. To get the scoop on* Bone*'s past and future, turn to page 86 for the Jeff Smith interview.



BONE ™ & © JEFF SMITH

A LETTER FROM OUR PUBLISHER

PHOTO: AL ORTEGA

ROGUE AND MS. MARVEL ™ & © MARVEL ENTERTAINMENT GROUP

Being a superhero's a drag.

Wizard Sells Out

Hey, what's going on here? I've been getting more and more reports lately that some *Wizard* fans have occasionally had to go *Wizard*less. Talk about cruel and unusual punishment! If your local retailer sells out of *Wizard* before you can secure a copy, go to him or her and say, "Hey, how can I be hip-hop be-bop without the latest *Wizard*? Can you please order a couple more?" You'll be be-boppin' before you know it.

So...I bet you're wondering, "What's hip-hoppin' in this issue?" All sorts of really cool stuff. We lead off with an in-depth preview of Marvel's hottest new mutant team, Generation X! Cool stuff. We also dig deep into how the new Green Lantern will be keeping himself busy, what *Prime* artist Norm Breyfogle has to say, the musings of *Bone*'s Jeff Smith, hot news on Marvel's acquisition of the Disney license, and loads more. Sheesh, talk about a packed issue.

Is that all that's in this issue? By no means! We've also got the kind of contests you've demanded: cool ones. We've worked double time to put together some of the coolest promotions ever run in *Wizard*. You can win a trip to sunny L.A., where you can party with Rob Liefeld, and a trip to, uh, New Jersey, where you can go bowling with Joe Quesada. You'll also get the chance to design a costume for Homer Simpson and enter a Sabretooth sweepstakes. These contests are all full of very cool stuff—I know you'll love 'em.

Some of you wrote in to say that you received your copy of *Gen*^{13} #1/2 (available only if you mailed in the coupon in *Wizard* #30), and that you thought it was really cool. You're right: Jim Lee and his crew over at Homage Studios did a bang-up job. And if you thought that was cool, wait till *Prime* #1/2 shows up. That book is smokin'!

¡*Adiós*!

'94

Gareb S. Shamus
besar kédju

THE GUIDE WIZARD TO COMICS

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BPA International membership applied for November 1993

Magic Words

So why the heck do people write letters to *Wizard*, anyhoo? I can think of four reasons:
1) They're really, really pleased about something.
2) They're really, really torqued off about something.
3) They've got something to say.
4) They like to see their name in print.
There's nothing wrong with any of these reasons, but for those of you who fall into categories 3 or 4, here's a few tips on how to maximize your chances of seeing your letter in print in Magic Words:
➜ Thoughtful letters are good, emotional letters are bad. If you think *Punch-Man* sucks sour frog ass, don't just send in a letter saying, "*Punch-Man* sucks sour frog ass! I hope Emil Muzz, creator of Punch-Man, gets hit by a speeding beer truck!" That's visceral, yeah, but it just doesn't sing. Let your brain write the letter, not your heart. Tell us what makes Punch-Man so lousy. Same goes for gushing praise: tell us why *Pummel-Man* is the greatest thing since sliced bread, not just that it is.
➜ Don't be a weak sop. If you've got a strong opinion, voice it. This may seem to contradict the first tip, but not really. Just support what you have to say with a decent argument. Tell us that you think *Punch-Man* is lousy because his hair has changed color four times in the last six issues without any explanation. Win someone over to your cause. If you're afraid of stepping on someone's toes, don't be. Chances are they won't come to your house and beat you up. There's no need to get libelous, but don't be afraid of a little controversy.
➜ Send in those burning questions! Get 'em off your chest and give us the opportunity to educate your fellow readers. Ever wonder where the heck that big penny in the Batcave came from? Ask us. Want to know what John Byrne eats for breakfast? Ask.
➜ Size isn't important. At least, that's what they've been telling me for years. If you've got one simple question, ask it and end your letter. Don't overdo it. If you've got something that takes three pages to describe, do it. Don't cut yourself short. Take as much or as little space as you need to express your thoughts.

Dear Wizard People:

One of my favorite departments in *Wizard* is Magic Words. I think that it is a wonderful idea: a forum for the readers of the magazine to voice their opinions about the comic industry and ask questions about comics and those who create them. Lately, however, it seems that Magic Words has been an open battlefield for those who write and draw the comics, as well as executives of the comic industry.

I have never written a letter to a magazine to complain about anything, and I find it sad that it has come to this. Just after Magic Words finished with the "sexist" issue, now comes the parade of writers, artists, and execs to voice their (sometimes rude) opinions. I partially blame *Wizard* for allowing this to happen, but I also blame those who have written the letters.

Wizard should have the decency to stop the printing of letters like this, and leave the space open for what it was meant for—the fans, their questions, and their opinions. The writers, artists, and execs should have the respect to keep their personal battles out of the pages of *Wizard*... I am currently pursuing a career in comics, and I do not want *all* of my illusions shattered by bickering in the pages of my favorite magazine.

Linley B. Porter
Chapmanville, WV

Uh, sorry.

One of the fairly cool things about the comics biz is that the line between the "fans" and the "professionals" is pretty thin and fuzzy; a lot of people straddle it. I think "industry pro" letters are appropriate for this column, as are letters just like the one you've sent. We're all pretty much the same people, it's just that our specific concerns may differ.

Letters from comic creators will continue to run here as they come, as will letters from straight "fans." Both fulfill the mission of what we're doing on this page. If for whatever reason you don't want to read them, you can just skip them. To wit:

Dear Editor,

I was saddened to read Mr. Richard Pini's letter in *Wizard* #30 regarding Tom Palmer Jr.'s favorable review of my work, *A Distant Soil*. Since I have never spoken with Mr. Palmer, and since I was not quoted in the article, frankly, I don't know what Mr. Pini is upset about. If Pini is going to continue to have this kind of obsessively

emotional outburst every time *A Distant Soil* receives press, I doubt he will have much time left to write *Elfquest*...

Since I am not the cause of his unhappiness, I should not be the focus of his hostility.

I accept Mr. Pini's congratulations. In return, I wish Pini continued success with *Elfquest*. I do wish, however, that he would leave me alone.

Colleen Doran
Publisher
Aria Press

To Anyone Who Cares:

As of February 1, independent comic publishers are dead.

And Capital City Distribution killed them...

On January 6, [Capital City announced] a policy of fining a comic company $500 for canceling a book and an added $750 to resolicit... This new policy is meant to be the death of independent comics. Everett Hartsoe, publisher of London Night Studios, phoned up Chris Blue, purchasing manager of Capital, to ask, "Why the ax?" Mr. Blue said, "To weed out the garbage." And it will. This poleaxing is going to destroy the independents, and isn't it convenient that the new policy goes into effect *after* Marvel cancels 20 or 30 of its titles?

Do you think I'm crying wolf? This is war, and you, the independent publisher or fan, are the target. If Capital gets away with this industry rape, do you think that Diamond Comics Distributors will wait a heartbeat to get their pound of flesh? *Think again, fanboy*. These new fees are supposed to pay for their costs of canceling a title—like it's killing them when *Dark Angel* ships a little late or *Tears II* is canceled. We know who's responsible for putting the hurt on Capital and messing up retailers' cash flow: Image Comics. Todd, Jim, and Rob have made a mess with their bastard offspring of seven egomaniacs. Do your homework, kids, and you'll find that Image *cost* Capital more money than they made them. It seems as if these morons will destroy the very thing they purport to love—independence. This new penalty is a slap on the wrist to chronic offenders like them, Continuity Comics, Comico, and the other kings of soliciting 20 books a month that will never come out. Is Image going to clean up the mess they've made? I doubt it—that would take courage...

What about Capital? Are they going to pay me for their screw-ups? They're sitting on 1,800 Dahmer comics that they ordered from Boneyard two years ago. Because they felt it was politically incorrect, they did not ship these books to stores who ordered them, and instead told them that they never received the books—an outright lie! They tried to make me buy them back one year later! Capital did this to me again when I shipped them 400 copies of *Rectum Errrectum: Halloween Fun* in October 1992. They found the cover offensive to their tastes, again shorting their customers and giving no explanation why, except my own (nonexistent) incompetence... I tried to be a nice guy: I took them back, and now they're going to give it to me in the back. This is supposed to be the company that's friendly to independents and adults-only titles? I've never had so many problems.

We've got enough problems in this industry without this. I just appeared on *The Sally Jesse Raphael Show*, where the battle cry is, "Give comics back to kids." Any of you remember what happened in the '50s with EC and the Comics Code? Well, it's going to happen again. I've arguably, without killing Superman, brought more new readers into stores than any new independent publisher. How? By going on talk shows, by doing crazy things the corporate rectums pucker at the idea of. Rush Limbaugh said he enjoyed and talked about the *Rush Limbaugh Must Die* comic on the air, and so has Howard Stern. Their followers' curiosity will be piqued, and they will go look for it. Anyone who watched me on [TV] is more likely to waltz into a comic book store than they ever were before. But I don't know if I'm going to survive this, and I've already walked the fires of hell.

The attitude of the moneymakers in this industry is, "Screw the independents, who needs 'em?" *You, the comic buyer, need 'em*. We do the grunt work, take all the risks. You won't find any Marvel comics at your local library, or in *Time* magazine's literary section next to *Maus*.

There would be no Vertigo without the independents to build the adult audience, to prove its viability to the corporate bean counters. We're in this business because we love it. We work crappy day jobs, and slave over the board at night. We drive to every convention we can, cars loaded with product. Without us, there would be no *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles, Bone, The Crow, Cadillacs & Dinosaurs, Cerebus, The Tick*, or frontier books like *Faust*.

Capital City is shooting this industry in the foot. Where will the next generation of Alan Moores, Erik Larsens, Jim Valentinos, Vincent Lockes, Simon Bisleys, and Sam Kieths come from? They cut their teeth in the trenches. We'll be left with nothing but inbred mongoloids like Stephen Platt.

Anger is a gift: use it. Store owners should write to Capital's owners, John Davis and Milton Griepp. Express your dissatisfaction over the new policy. It truly is up to you and the larger publishers. Will Mike Richardson remember how Dark Horse started out in the back of a comic shop? Will Dave Sim, John Byrne, Todd McFarlane, and other advocates of independents flex their muscle and get something done, or will they just stand by and watch...? Are they going to let guys like me take all the risks? Believe me, this letter is a helluva risk. Don't be surprised when Capital stops carrying all of Boneyard Press's titles because of this letter three or four months down the road. My cry of rape is not going to sit well, because they would prefer you to remain in the dark... You must sit up and act. I ask John and Milton, no, I demand that they respond publicly to this base act of destruction.

I've had a lot of fun in this business. It's too bad me and the other smaller kids aren't allowed in the sandbox anymore. I said it a year ago, and I'll say it again: they won't take your rights away all at once...they'll do it in small pieces.

Hart D. Fisher
Publisher
Boneyard Press

Capital City declined to comment in this space.

Captain America ™ & © Marvel Entertainment Group

Dear Wizard,

I would like to propose a contest for *Wizard*. Over the past decade, the single

Pen Pals

Want to get in touch with your fellow comic fans? Or want them to touch you? Send your name, address, age, gender and three favorite titles to "Pen Pals," c/o Wizard Press, at Magic Words' address on page 16. Hey, make a friend!

Pedro Potier
Age: 18 Sex: M
Urb. Do Falcao
Lote 502-17-B 1675
Pontinha, Portugal
Likes: *Spawn, John Byrne's Next Men, X-Men*

Michael Amrhein
Age: 19 Sex: M
112 Hoyt St. Apt 5E
Stamford, CT 06905
Likes: *Guardians of the Galaxy, Bloodshot*, all Image titles

Jennifer Hardin
Age: 14 Sex: F
114 Sunrise St.
Andalusia, AL 36420
Likes: *Star Trek: The Next Generation, Deathlok*, all Anne Rice titles

Alberto Tofoya
Age: 14 Sex: M
2050 A 41st
Los Alamos, NM 87544
Likes: Image, Valiant, and DC titles

most overused expression by superheroes leaping into battle has become, "Hit 'em hard and fast!"

"Hit 'em hard and fast" is an expression that writers of grim and gritty team books use to make their characters sound tough. It's how wimpy writers imagine a hero with an attitude would talk. (Like what else would they say—"Hit 'em slow and soft!"?)

"Hit 'em hard and fast" was first popularized (and then beaten to death) by Chris Claremont during his 15-year run on *X-Men*. It was then picked up on by the subsequent X-Men writers, particularly Fabian Nicieza [and] Claremont's old X-editor, Bob Harras...

The use of this phrase shows [that] a writer would rather recycle an old cliché than think up a new idea. The only way to put an end to this cliché is by identifying which writers are guilty of using it the most.

I am confident that some *Wizard* reader out there has more free time than I do, and can spend the time it would take to do the research. Maybe you could give the winner a prize or something. Just based on the sheer number of books he has to hack through, I'd put my money on Fabian Nicieza, but who knows, maybe I'll be surprised.

Well, go to it, *Wizard* fans! Pull out those old comics, and...read 'em hard and fast!

Jeff Brickman
Greenpoint, NJ

Sounds cool. I've personally got $10 and, oh, what the hell, we'll throw in the limited edition silver embossed *Cyberforce* #2 and the limited edition gold embossed *WildC.A.T.s* #6 for whoever can do the job.

Write down your name, full mailing address, phone number with area code, the name of the writer who's used "Hit 'em hard and fast" the most, the places he's used that cliché, and the number of times he's used it on a three-by-five-inch index card or postcard and mail it to Cliché Contest, c/o Wizard Press, 151 Wells Ave., Congers, NY 10920-2064. All entries must be received by June 6, 1994. All entries become property of Wizard Press, and none will be returned. Employees of Wizard Press will select a winner; all decisions are final. For the name of the winner, available after June 12, 1994, send a self-addressed, stamped envelope to Cliché Winner, c/o Wizard Press, 151 Wells Ave., Congers, NY 10920-2064, or just look in Magic Words in a future issue!

Dear Wizard,

In *Batman* #497, how come there's a dinosaur on the cover?

How come Bloodshot is always getting the living hell beat out of him?

Cacey Landrum
Baton Rouge, LA

Well, once upon a time, Bats and Robin went to an amusement park where this bad guy thought it would be a good idea to kill them with giant, mechanical dinosaurs. After thrashing the mechadinos, Batman said something to the effect of, "Cheese, Louise, one of these big ol' things would make a nifty trophy. Let's bring it back to the Batcave." The rest, as they say, is history.

As to Bloodshot, I think it's that lousy haircut with that darn "Z" thing on the sides. Every time I see him in the hall here, I just want to give him a smack.

BLOODSHOT™ & © VOYAGER COMMUNICATIONS INC.

Dear Wizard,

What would happen if Prime fought Superman?

Catarino Hernandez Jr.
Ft. Worth, TX

We imagine there would be bulging biceps galore, hysteria, destruction, folding, spindling, mutilating, fire, gnashing of teeth, and a ton o' dough made by DC and Malibu.

Dear Magic Words,

What or who keeps Image or other companies from publishing material which clearly belongs in an 18-or-above category if they aren't approved or "checked" by anyone [such as the Comics Code Authority]? I'm not saying any of Image's stuff belongs there, but who keeps it from going over the edge?

I also have an offer! In my English class, I have been assigned to have something published in a periodical by June 6, 1994. When I first heard this, I said to myself, "*Wizard*!" Now don't tear this up thinking that I'm some little punk who wants to see his letter published so he can show all his friends. This could seriously expand your reading audience. You at *Wizard* have said that you're constantly trying to broaden your readership. Wouldn't you be pleased if I brought a future copy of *Wizard* into my English class and said, with a proud look on my face, "Mr. English Teacher, look what I've done! I got a letter published in *Wizard*"? Then he'd say, "What's *Wizard*?" And then I'd say, "It's this swell magazine about comic books that has lots of nifty interviews and cool pictures and..."

Imagine the consequences of this simple act. My English teacher would be so overwhelmed and amazed that such a unique and intriguing magazine exists that he'd take a copy to his next teachers meeting and get all the teachers to start reading *Wizard*. They'd love it so much that they'd incorporate it into our curriculum, and before you know it, children in schools everywhere would learn about the comic book medium through your magazine.

Gabe Vaughan
Amherst, MA

For the Code question, the only thing holding publishers back is themselves. One would hope that publishers would act responsibly, or at least in a way that would not take money out of their own pockets by cutting off their younger readership. There is a small percentage of comic shops which now only sell selected Image titles to customers 18 and older.

This other thing sounds like something I might have done when I was in eighth grade English. So you get by. But this is a one-time deal, so the rest of you can just hold your pens! No more free rides!

Dear Wizard,

I have some questions:

1. Is Prophet's friend Kirby really small, or is Prophet just really tall?

2. Did Rogue steal her strength and flying abilities from Ms. Marvel?

3. Could Nightcrawler teleport from New York to Sydney, Australia, if he wanted to, or can he only teleport a certain distance?

Sean Konnry
Unionville, Ontario, Canada

1. Both.

2. Yes, she did. But later, Ms. Marvel, known as Binary this time (yeah, right—like you'd really get superpowers twice in your life), came back and rapped Rogue sharply about the head and shoulders for it.

3. Nope. He can go about a mile, tops. He's also got to know where he's going, or risk teleporting inside a rock or something, which would hurt like heck.

Dear Wizard,

After reading "Just Add Water" in issue #31, I momentarily thought someone had plagiarized Rob Liefeld's section in *Creating Comics the Image Way*.

Tony "FireHellKillWar" Sandoval
El Cajon, CA

Dear Wizard,

Don't you think DC's upcoming *Zero Hour* storyline will make all of this stuff with Superman, Batman, and Green Lantern kinda useless? I mean, after *Zero Hour*, they're gonna

'toons

The first prizes we're giving away to the 'toons artist are a *Power of Shazam!* hardcover with an original Jerry Ordway Shazam sketch and signature inside and a *Sword of Azrael* trade paperback with an original Joe Quesada Azrael sketch and signature inside!

Joseph Pile
Hudson, KY

Fans who wish to submit their own cartoons to *Wizard* for possible publication as a 'toon should mail their entries to 'toons, c/o Wizard Press, 151 Wells Ave., Congers, NY 10920-2064. Submissions in pencil, neon inks, or metallic inks will not be accepted; submissions in any other medium—crayon, pen, marker, et cetera—are fine. Artwork must not be larger than eight by 11 and a quarter inches. Do not fold, bend, or roll artwork; mail flat to avoid damage. Illustrations may be single or multiple panels. All entries are nonreturnable.

Jeff Peterson
Age: 14 Sex: M
25166 Aulac N.
Chesterfield, MI 48051
Likes: X-titles, Image and Valiant titles

Melissa Ahrens
Age: 14 Sex: F
252 E. Dawn Dr.
Keller, TX 76248
Likes: *X-Men, Uncanny X-Men, Punisher*

Bobby Mickam
Age: 13 Sex: M
30913 Country Ridge Cir.
Farmington Hills, MI 48331
Likes: *X-O Manowar, Youngblood, Eternal Warrior*

Dustin Ives
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960 N.W. Cleveland #4
Corvallis, OR 97330
Likes: *Cyberforce, Brigade, StormWatch*

Juno Choi
Age: 14 Sex: M
10470 W. Norwich Ave.
Greenfield, WI 53228
Likes: *Silver Surfer, Savage Dragon*

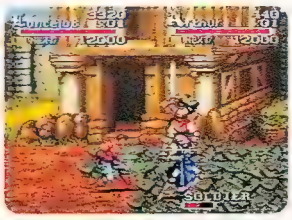
Charles F. Sidileau
Age: 23 Sex: M
29 Great Brook Valley Ave. #4
Worcester, MA 01605
Likes: *Spawn*, all X-titles, all Spidey titles

Erin Carrington
Age: 16 Sex: F
Box 224
Graceville, MN 56240-0224
Likes: *Wolverine, Sabretooth*, all X-titles

Dillon Fisher
Age: 13 Sex: M
620 Tahoe Ct.
Ukiah, CA 95482
Likes: *Brigade, Cyberforce, Spawn*

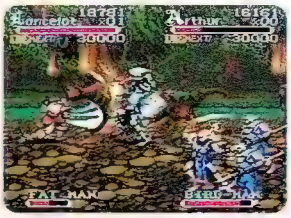
NO KNIGHT CLUB HAS EVER SEEN THIS MUCH ACTION.

When the [illustration] putting their medieval kingdom is ransacked by a mysterious Army, Merlin charges King Arthur, Sir Lancelot and Percival with procuring the Holy Grail to rid the land of evil. On their quest, these Knights of the Round encounter more than their share of nefarious evils, swordsmenship and bravery to the ultimate test. As they engage in combat with the leader of the dark army, they'll require every attack and defense maneuver they can muster. It's the very same fantasy action as the hit arcade game. Except you don't have to wait in line to play.



While King Arthur prepares for battle, Lancelot fights an enemy soldier.

Lancelot gets his slashes in on Bradford, whose flying kicks already hurt Percival.



King Arthur puts his Excalibur to the test as he executes his famous "mega slice".

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Ask the WIZARD

Q: Does the Beast need to get a weekly haircut?
—S. Bosworth, Lisbon, OH
A: *He sheds.*

Q: Isn't Apocalypse too cool a character to have a big goofy "A" on his belt buckle?
—J. Rosa, Escondido, CA
A: *He just shops in the same store as Magnus Robot Fighter.*

Q: How much wood would a woodchuck chuck if a woodchuck could chuck wood?
—J. La Ferrera, Mechanicsville, PA
A: *It's all a big hoax—there's no such things as woodchucks.*

Q: If Shadowcat was phasing through something and suddenly became whole again, what would happen?
—R. Lyons, Port St. Lucie, FL
A: *Her molecules would mix with whatever she's phasing through, and if enough of her was in the object, she'd die. If it was a living thing she was phasing through, it would probably die too.*

WIZARD wonders...

Does Catwoman spray her costume with silicone spray and jump off a ladder to get into that suit? That thing's so tight you can see if her bellybutton's an innie or an outie.

Ask the Pros

Hey, Rob Liefeld:
Is anybody else gonna write *Youngblood* after Jim Shooter?
—B. Dover, Coral Springs, FL

PHOTO: AL ORTEGA

Have a question that's bugging the heck out of you and that no one can answer? Heck, the Wizard can answer anything. Just send your stumpers to Ask the Wizard, c/o Wizard Press, 151 Wells Ave., Congers, NY 10920-2064

redo everything like they did after *Crisis on Infinite Earths*... And by the way, do you think they're gonna ever marry Lois Lane and Clark Kent? They've been engaged for three years.

Scott Haarz
Plymouth, MI

According to Maureen McTigue, DC's assistant manager of marketing communications, "*Zero Hour* will have a significant effect on all our characters. How it will affect them will be the story. These three events are significant events in these characters' continuity. Why would we redo them?" Why, indeed?

Also, according to Maureen, the highly anticipated Superwedding is still on, and will happen sometime in the future.

Dear Wizard,

I was at one of the very rare comic shows in my town, and I was having a very nice discussion with one of the owners of a comic shop near me... We got onto the subject of special comics like the glow-in-the-dark *Maxx* #1, gold-foil *Youngblood* #0, et cetera. He said that the companies send those to him for free. That is so unfair! I can understand that they might have a low print run, but why do they have to have such high prices (gold-foil *Youngblood* #0: $65)? I don't think it's fair that a comic which dealers get for free has such a high price... I would just like to know why they're so expensive.

Ted Collins
Niles, OH

Because people are willing to spend lotsa scratch on them, although why anyone would want to spend an extra $60 on a book because it has a stupid-looking bar or different-colored logo is beyond me. The basic give-and-take of supply and demand determines these prices, just as with cars, kumquats, or petroleum jelly.

Dear Wizard,

Will there be a change of costume for Spider-Man in the future? I'm sentimental to a certain degree, but I just don't like his red, white, and blue pajamas anymore. I think everyone loved the black duds, but he won't go back in black, as you know, because of Mary Jane. Fill me in on any costume change for ol' Spidey.

Brian Chapman
Newnan, GA

Quoth the Marvel sage Gary Guzzo: "We were playing with the idea for a while, but the idea just seemed to be too in vogue, what with [the] recent revampings we did with Daredevil and what DC did with Superman. So we're not going to do it."

Dear Wizard,

Hey! I was going through #30 when I came to the ever-popular price guide. As I was checking out some abbreviations, I came upon two famous names among the artists. They were Darth Vader and Elmer Fudd.

Did I just stumble across a supersecret contest, or was this just for the heck of it?

Ray Llopiz
Richmond Hill, NY

Actually, they're both top-notch comic artists. You can find Vader's work in the *Alpha Flight/Quasar* mini-series, while Fudd is working on the upcoming *WetWorks*.

DARTH VADER ™ & © LUCASFILM LTD.

Dear Freaks,

I have just put down my copy of *Wizard* #31, and all I can say is, "Hot diggity dog!" I have been reading your magazine since issue #6, and one of the main things that brought me back for more Wizardrific entertainment was the humor all of your writers injected into their articles. You weren't afraid to speak your minds about what you thought of others' opinions, favorite superheroes, comics, or stupidity. But in recent issues, the humor level seemed to be dropping off. Maybe it was because of letters like Harry Ford Coffill's in issue #23.

To all those people who are offended by the magazine, I say, "Chill out!" There is a hell of a lot more wrong with this world than a few words or opinions written in *Wizard*.

Sheldon Hingst
North Bay, Ontario, Canada

Thanks for the kind words, but the next person who says "Wizardrific" is gonna get a smack.

Dear Wizard,

When am I going to be getting my own comic back? I mean, this new guy with his armored suit and everything was OK for a few issues, but it's already getting a little long in the tooth for me. You know I have

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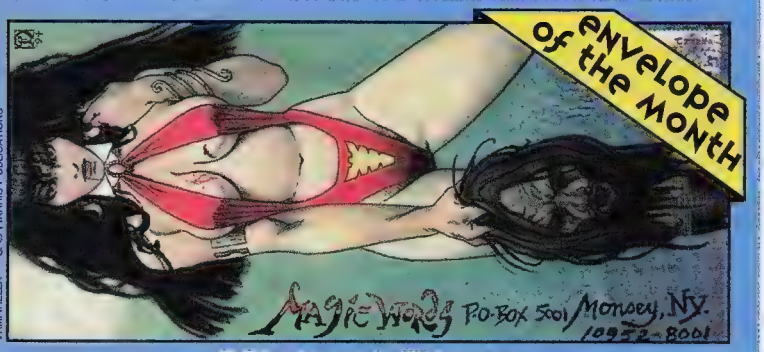


VAMPIRELLA ™ & © HARRIS PUBLICATIONS

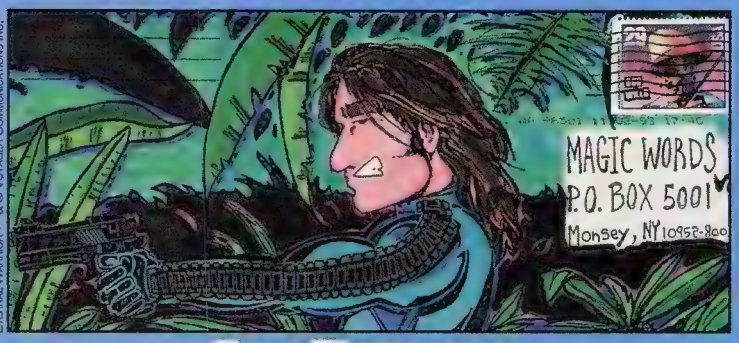
Michael Dixon
Toronto, Ontario, Canada

THE MAXX ™ & © SAM KIETH

Darren Shaw
Roswell, GA

ALL CHARACTERS DEPICTED ™ & © MARVEL

Amy Pronovost
Wales, Australia



ETERNAL WARRIOR ™ & © VOYAGER COMMUNICATIONS INC.

Dan Fincannon
Olympia, WA

to return sooner or later—why not sooner? After all, it's not like I can collect unemployment or disability for this kind of thing.

Bruce Wayne
Address withheld by request

Honest, folks—people send these things in.

BRUCE WAYNE ™ & © DC COMICS

Dear Sirs,

Death to all Roman pigs. Thank you.

Dallas Stewart
Harrisonburg, VA

I've got a bad feeling that this is one of those Monty Python in-jokes that I've never understood.

Dear Wizard,

If you held two glow-in-the-dark *Maxx* books up to a light, taped them face to face, and put them in a dark room, would the glow of one keep the other one glowing and vice versa?

Luis Arredondo Jr.
Freeport, TX

Tell you what, Luis. I'll answer you if you answer me: which came first, the chicken or the egg?

That's a wrap! See you next month, and in the meantime, please, wait one hour after eating before you go swimming.

—Jim McLauchlin

Jim McLauchlin is the news editor at our sister publication (and why are they always sister publications? Shouldn't magazines be gender neutral?), Collector's Sportslook. *He spends most of his spare time eating pizza, drinking beer, resolving to get on* Jeopardy!, *and plotting the downfall of those who would destroy him.*

Send your letters to:
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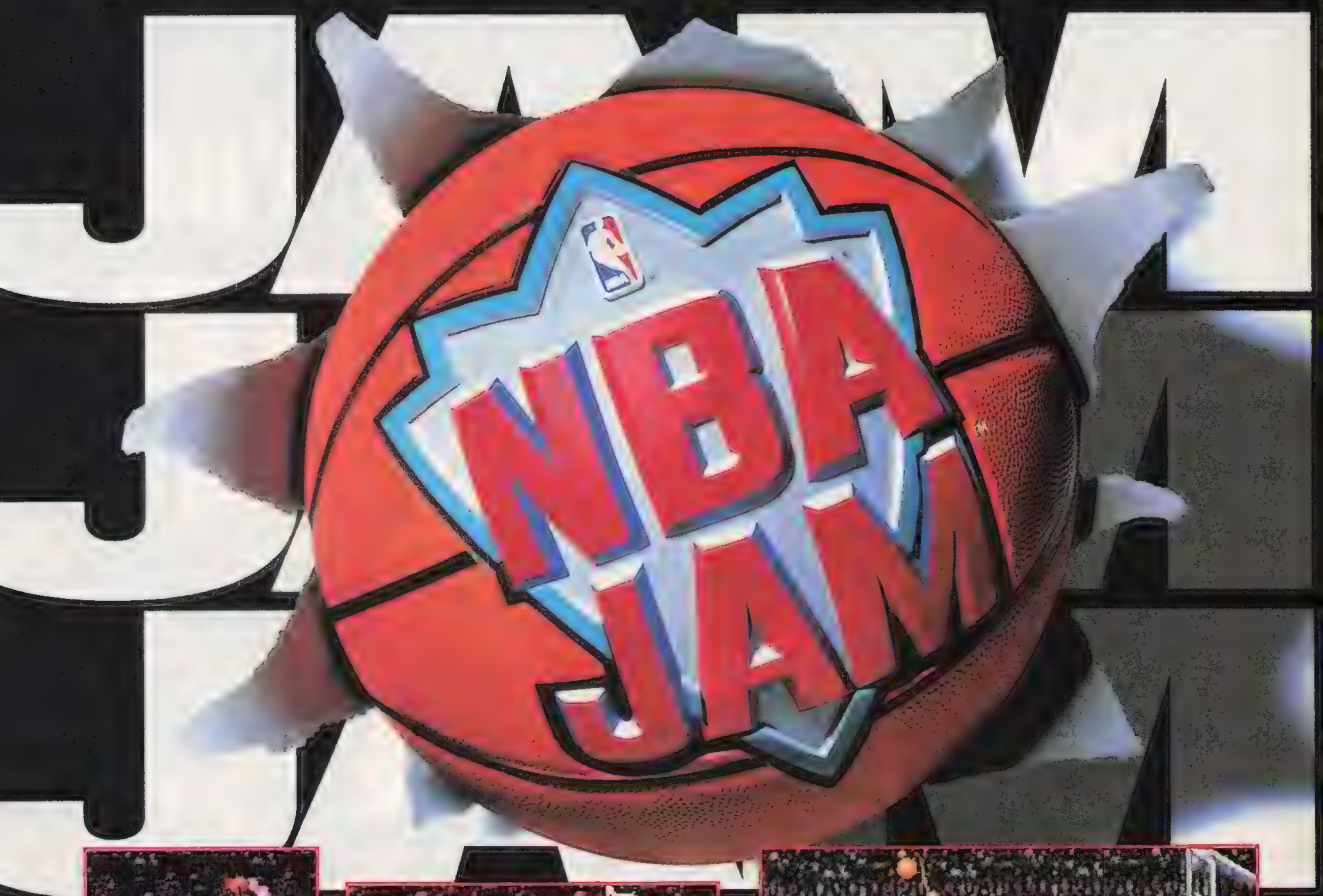
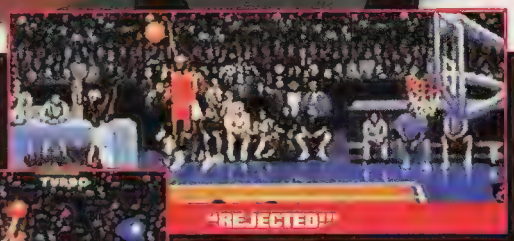
THE ULTIMATE ARCADE JAM COMES HOME!



"BOOMSHAKALAKA!"

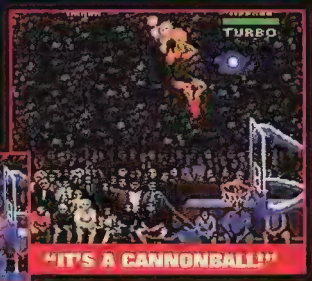


"REJECTED!"

"HE'S ON FIRE!"

"KABOOM!"

"OH MY!"



"IT'S A CANNONBALL!"

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THEN YOU FEEL THE

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"I'm not quite sure what happened. I just heard a shot...and when I awoke, I had this tag on my crotch. Damn kids."

PHOTO: AL ORTEGA

Evil demonic creature invades local comic convention, brings the Violator with him. "That one with the Wizard cap was butt-ugly." says startled showgoer.

PHOTO: AL ORTEGA

Starved zombie looks for brains at comic show, finds nothing. "All these kids read Wizard...I can't find anyone with brains!" exclaims undead freak.

PHOTO: AL ORTEGA

Wizard News

Wizard #34, June 1994 — Since 1990

Marvel Wins Disney License

Walt Disney and Marvel Comics have signed an agreement which grants Marvel the rights to publish original comics starring Disney characters.

Marvel's first Disney comic book will appear in May. It's an adaptation of *The Lion King*, Disney's newest feature-length animated musical, which opens June 17. The one-shot was written by Bobbi J.G. Weiss, who has written for Disney's own line of comics, and illustrated by Sparky Moore.

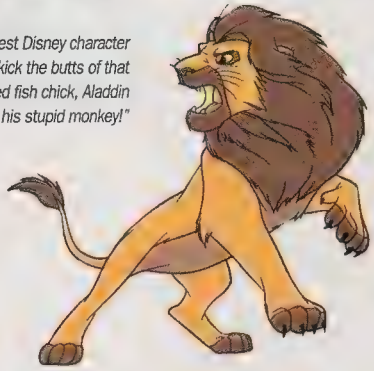
The first ongoing Disney title from Marvel will be *Beauty and the Beast*. It will be set before Belle and the Beast have their happy ending, and will be written by Barbara Slate and penciled by Cosme Quartieri, both of *Barbie* fame. It's scheduled for an early July debut.

In July, readers will be able to follow the new adventures of Ariel and her underwater friends in *The Little Mermaid*. These stories will be set before the character traded her voice for legs. Well-known *Mermaid* fan Peter David was originally offered the chance to write the series, but declined because of his heavy workload. The art team for the series will be Mary Wilshire and Dave Hunt.

August will see the debut of the *Aladdin* series, written by Lee Nordling, who has also written for Disney's comics line, and illustrated by newcomer penciler Chuck Frazier and Jeff Albrecht. Unlike the other series, *Aladdin* will be a sequel of sorts to the movie, and will tie in with the animated TV series, set to debut this fall. The series will send Aladdin on a quest to prove his worthiness.

A fourth ongoing series, *Disney Afternoon*, will hit the stands in late September. *Anthology* will feature short pieces using characters from Disney afterschool cartoons such as *Darkwing Duck*, *Ducktales*, *Goof Troop*, and *Tale Spin*.

"I'm the toughest Disney character to date. I'll kick the butts of that red-headed fish chick, Aladdin and his stupid monkey!"



™ & © DISNEY

Disney characters were among the first to appear in comic books. Mickey Mouse, for example, debuted between cardboard covers in 1931, long before Superman's premiere in *Action Comics* #1. Titles like *Walt Disney Comics & Stories*, *Donald Duck*, and *Uncle Scrooge* had long runs under the Dell, Gold Key, and Whitman banners between 1940 and 1984. Gladstone began publishing Disney titles in 1986, and regained the licenses after Disney's own brief publishing venture in 1990-91. Gladstone's Disney titles are currently distributed to newsstands by Marvel.

—Paul J. Grant

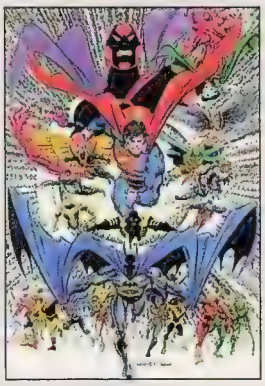
DC Zeroes In on '94

DC Comics has revealed its plans for 1994. The big story, though hardly the only one, is this July's five-issue *Zero Hour: Crisis in Time* mini-series, written and penciled by Dan Jurgens and inked by Jerry Ordway.

The story of *Zero Hour* begins when DC's heroes discover a wave of time disruption. They find that the dead are alive, that doppelgangers exist, and that people and places are changing. In the 30th century, the world is literally falling apart. By the end of the mini-series, the entire DC Universe will change dramatically. As a result of *Zero Hour*, a new Dr. Fate and a new Starman will each get ongoing books.

In DC's flagship Superman titles, a major new villain called Conduit, whose origin may be tied to Superman's, will appear; Jor-El and Lara will return; and, in *Superman* #100, an enemy will learn that Clark Kent and Superman are one and the same. These new story developments are complemented by the return of creator John Byrne, who will write and draw *Action Comics Annual* #6, a July "Elseworlds" story that places Superman in the American Revolution.'

In the Batman titles, the "KnightsEnd" story will lead into an ongoing *Azrael* series, set to debut in October. DC is keeping quiet on whether it will star Jean Paul Valley or an entirely new person. Denny O'Neil, Barry Kitson, and James Pascoe will work on the series. June's *Batman/Punisher: Lake of Fire*, by O'Neil, Kitson, and Pascoe, has Marvel's vigilante meeting Jean Paul Valley in the Batsuit. Late 1994's *Batman vs. Predator II: Bloodmatch* four-issue mini-series by Doug Moench, Paul Gulacy, and Terry Austin matches up the two characters for a second go-around, this time with the Huntress thrown into the mix. On the Elseworlds front, *Batman: Bloodstorm*, the sequel to *Batman: Red Rain*, will ship this December; it's by Moench, Kelley Jones, and John Beatty.



ALL CHARACTERS SHOWN ™ & © DC COMICS

DC Comics's Zero Hour: Crisis in Time *begins this July.*

Other DC mainstays will get facelifts. Aquaman will get his own monthly title in July, courtesy of Peter David, newcomer Marty Egeland, and Brad Vancata. *Zero Hour* will probably change the character radically, according to editor Kevin Dooley. Wonder Woman, too, will undergo major

changes, becoming much more of a warrior, and being replaced by another amazon. The Flash will uncover a secret about himself that affects all superspeed characters in the DC Universe, and he'll witness the return of Iris West, which was foretold a year ago in *Flash*.

Sandman's last tale will be told sometime in 1995 in a series-ending issue by Neil Gaiman and Charles Vess, the same team that produced the award-winning *Sandman* #19. First, however, DC will publish the conclusion of "The Kindly Ones": "The Wake," a story arc by Gaiman and artist Michael Zulli; and a sequence of unrelated one-issue stories.

Judge Dredd, a brand-new ongoing series starting in June which starts the lawman of Mega-City One, will now be published by DC; it will stand outside of the publisher's regular continuity. There will also be a *Judge Dredd: Legends of the Law* series beginning in October. *Legends of the Law* will be formatted like *Batman: Legends of the Dark Knight*, in which each story arc is done by different creators.

Allred Joins Legend

Madman Comics creator Mike Allred has officially become the eighth member of Legend, a creator-owned imprint consisting of creators John Byrne, Frank Miller, Art Adams, Paul Chadwick, Geof Darrow, Dave Gibbons, and Mike Mignola.

"It didn't take me too long to think about it," Allred says of the offer to join Legend. "It's something I'm really excited about. Frank Miller called me up and I thought he wanted to talk about toys. Instead, he told me that he and the guys of Legend were excited about my work and unanimously asked me to join. And once I heard the dental plan, I decided to join right away."

The Legend icon is expected to debut the cover of *Madman Comics* #2.

Star Trek Crossover

Malibu Comics and DC Comics have announced plans for two *Star Trek: The Next Generation/Star Trek: Deep Space Nine* crossover series, in which characters from both series will fully interact. Malibu, the publisher of the regular *Deep Space Nine* regular series, will produce a two-issue mini-series, as will DC, the publisher of the *Next Generation* regular series.

Mike W. Barr, writer of *Deep Space Nine*, will script the Malibu series, while Michael Jan Friedman, a frequent contributor to DC's *Next Generation*, will write DC's effort. Gordon Purcell and Terry Pallot will illustrate both mini-series, and Margaret Clark of DC and Mark Paniccia of Malibu will co-edit the books.

The story, according to Friedman, is unique. "For the first time, both casts are involved in a single adventure," he says. "What brings them together is a threat to the wormhole and the civilizations on both sides of it."

Friedman adds, "This is very different from what you'll see on television. It's something special that the fans really want to see."

DC's *Star Trek: The Next Generation/Star Trek: Deep Space Nine* #1 and Malibu's *Star Trek: Deep Space Nine/Star Trek: The Next Generation* #1 will be released simultaneously in October. Both #2s will be released in November.

Sears's Ominous Press

Superartist Bart Sears is forming his own publishing company, Ominous Press, and starting in July, Sears will introduce fans to his own comic book universe via three projects.

The first project is a 16-page comic entitled *Brute & Babe: It Begins*. It will contain an eight-page story featuring Brute and Babe, the characters who star in Sears's monthly Brutes & Babes column for *Wizard*, as well as an eight-page Ominous Press overview. The second project, due in August, is *Mael's Rage*, a 32-page book in which Brute and Babe's story will really start to roll. The third effort, also due in August, will be *Brute & Babe: The Death of Pheros*, a 16-page comic containing the death of a major character.

Future projects from Ominous include an ongoing *Brute & Babe* title, *Arkon the Giantkiller*, *Intrepid*, *Insidious*, *Pheros*, *Armorgeddon*, *Nightbeast*, *Megamen*, and *Tirrus*.

Why self-publish? According to Sears, "Many of the present [publishers] take their creators for granted, draining all of the creative energy from them, until they become disenchanted with comics. I want the opposite for Ominous Press. Comics should be fun for the people reading them as well as for those creating them."

Brute & Babe ™ & © Bart Sears

Bart Sears's Brute and Babe.

Sears is working with creators Andy Smith, Mark Pennington, Ray Kryssing, and others.

Sears, who feels that established publishers don't take chances, is toying with a new comics format called a Monument Set, which is a comic that isn't bound by staples; instead, each page stands alone as a tablet and tells a story in exactly the same way as a normal comic would. Sears also says that each Ominous book will contain a 17-page main story and a seven-page backup. "Most artists are not comfortable working on 24 pages per month," Sears says. "The 17-page story will allow the creator to work at a more comfortable pace."

In addition to his Ominous projects, Sears is also penciling Marvel Comics's *Silver Surfer* for an undetermined amount of time.

Axis to Print Shaman's Tears

Mike Grell's Creative Fire Studio announced that it has signed a deal with Axis Comics through which Axis will publish *Shaman's Tears*, Grell's critically and popularly acclaimed series. Axis will print other Grell titles, including *Bar Sinister*, which stars the team of genetic combatants from *Shaman's Tears*, and *Sable and the Cat*, the new adventures of Grell's Jon Sable Freelance, who originally starred in his own series published by First Comics. As the title indicates, Sable will be joined by Maggie the cat burglar, a popular recurring character from the old series.

According Grell's editor, Mike Gold, the team-up with Axis co-publishers Larry Stroman and Todd Johnson, may not have been inevitable, but it certainly makes a great deal of sense. "Quite frankly, Axis made us the best and most business-wise offer," Gold says, "both financially and from a timing perspective. We all share the same concerns and have shared the same sort of experiences with other publishers in the past. There's a commonality of purpose between Creative Fire Studios and Axis Comics that is extraordinarily strong."

Shaman's Tears will resume publishing in June with issue #3, which never saw print because the title was canceled by Image last fall.

The *Shaman's* original team will remain on the title: Grell will handle the writing and art, with Brian Snoddy assisting on the art and Julia Lacquement coloring it. Rick Hoberg will draw *Bar Sinister*, while Dick Giordano is set to draw *Sable and the Cat*. Grell will write both series. *Bar Sinister* will be launched in late summer, and *Sable* will debut in late fall.

—Robert J. Sodaro

Hulk Faces AIDS

Marvel's Incredible Hulk, considered by some to be the epitome of the unstoppable force, is about to face a problem all the strength of his massive body can't handle: one of his best friends is dying of AIDS.

Marvel readers first learned that former Hulk partner Jim Wilson was HIV-positive in *Incredible Hulk* #388. In #420, Jim will come back into the green giant's life, and he'll be dying from complications of Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome.

"The Hulk brings Jim to the Mount, the headquarters of the Pantheon, primarily to try to make his last hours as comfortable as possible," explains Peter David, longtime writer of the title. "But the Hulk is in a difficult situation, because it is possible that he and the Pantheon could cure Jim's con-

dition. The question becomes, should he do that?"

In the meantime, the Hulk's estranged wife, Betty Banner, in her role as a volunteer telephone help-line counselor, gets a call from a man who has just learned he's HIV-positive and is preparing to commit suicide. Betty has to try to talk him out of it.

INCREDIBLE HULK ™ & © MARVEL ENTERTAINMENT GROUP

The cover of Incredible Hulk *#420.*

This is, David says, a story which he intended to tell from the moment he introduced Jim Wilson's medical condition. "I've been trying to put the Hulk into situations where strength of arm is not always useful," he notes. "The old green Hulk would always announce, 'Hulk is the strongest one there is.' Sometimes that isn't enough."

The first Jim Wilson story generated some controversy, but *Hulk* editor Bobbie Chase says she's not afraid to stir up her readership. "Does it concern me that a story might upset some readers? No—I'm glad for it," she declares. "I want to get the readers thinking, whether they react positively or negatively. I want them to understand that we're trying to portray our characters as humans in the real world."

—Patrick Daniel O'Neill

Ultraverse Anniversary

The founding fathers of Malibu Comics's Ultraverse met on February 17, 1994, on Catalina Island, Calif., to map out the growth of their universe.

According to Malibu, the attendees hammered out a series of promotions that will be entirely editorial-driven, relying on stories to sell the books. The promotions might include the death of a popular character, like the event which launched 1993's "Break-Thru" crossover.

The framework for the Ultraverse was first conceived at a 1992 meeting in Scottsdale, Ariz. The second conference, held in early '93, unveiled it to the public. The Ultraverse will celebrate its first anniversary in June.

This year's meeting was attended by Ultraverse founders Mike W. Barr (writer of *Mantra* and *Wrath*), Steve Englehart (writer of *The Strangers* and *The Night Man*), Steve Gerber (*Sludge*), James D. Hudnall (*Hardcase* and *The Solution*), Gerard Jones (*Prime*, *Solitaire*, and *Freex*), James Robinson (*Firearm*), and Len Strazewski (*Prime* and *Prototype*) as well as Malibu Editor-in-Chief Chris Ulm (*Rune*) and editors Hank Kanalz, Dan Danko (*Warstrike*), and Roland Mann. The creative summit represented virtually the entire lineup of Ultraverse writers. Ultraverse founding father Larry Niven, who doesn't write a regular book, and Creative Director Tom Mason, co-writer of *Prototype*, did not attend.

So what's being planned for '94? Which characters are under the gun? Says Barr, "I could tell you, but I'd have to kill you."

—Andrew Steven Harris

Malibu Secures Voyager

Malibu Comics has secured the comic book publishing rights to the upcoming TV show *Star Trek: Voyager*. *Voyager* takes place in the same era as *Star Trek: The Next Generation* and *Deep Space Nine*, but is set on a ship stranded far away from Federation territory which must find a way back home. The creative team and release date are expected to be announced shortly.

Marvel Calling Cards

Marvel Entertainment is releasing telephone calling cards which bear the cover images of *Amazing Fantasy* #15, *Incredible Hulk* #393, and the recent *X-Men* #30.

A craze in Germany and other foreign nations, these particular calling cards are produced in conjunction with Global Telecommunication Solutions Inc. The cards will sell for $10 and be good for 20 minutes' worth of calling time; they will only be valid for calls in the United States. Marvel plans on releasing more calling cards featuring different characters in the future.

The cards can be ordered through the catalog which was bound into select Marvel comics released in March 1994 or by calling (212) 696-0810. Eventually, the cards will be sold in comic shops and specialty stores.

WHAT'S UP WITH...

Akira?

The popular Japanese comic book series *Akira*, published by Epic Comics, has had several production problems in the past few years, but issues of the series should ship at the end of this year. Series editor Marie Javins says that the series will now run 39 issues (over 30 issues have shipped thus far), with the story concluding in the first half of #38. The last half of #38 will present promotional art from Japan, and #39 will be a tribute to the *Akira* series featuring stories by several different creators.

—William A. Christensen and Mark Seifert

Extreme Skateboards

ALL CHARACTERS SHOWN ™ & © ROB LIEFELD INC.

Check out these cool new decks. Gremmies keep to the right.

Rob Liefeld's Extreme Studios, in conjunction with Acme Skateboards, is producing skateboards for distribution this June in skate and sport shops in 47 countries. There are five skateboard designs to choose from: Glory, Badrock, and the faces of Youngblood by Rob Liefeld; Prophet by Dan Panosian; and Troll by Jeff Matsuda.

Superhero Art Exhibit

Four Color Images, a comic art gallery in New York City, is hosting an exhibit of superhero art from April 14 to May 26. The show features art by Alex Ross, George Pratt, and Chris Bachalo, among others. For more information, call (212) 431-4234.

Company Updates

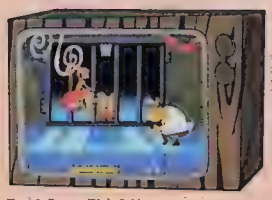
AC COMICS
Femforce Up Close #10, due out in July, resolves the plight of former Femforce member Colt as she rots away in prison.

ANTARCTIC PRESS
Tomorrow Man/Knighthunter: Last Rites, by Bobee Padilla and Jochen Weltjens, is due in July, along with *Knightmare*, an all-new series by P. Skylar Owens.

ARCHIE COMICS
Archie's Spectrum

The Ren & Stimpy Show Presents Stimpy's Invention
Sega of America Inc.
Sega Genesis
1 or 2 Players
Available: Now

Stimpy's latest invention is the Mutate-O-Matic, a device that will transform garbage into glazed ham. Unfortunately, the gadget has exploded, and pieces of it have been scattered throughout the neighborhood. As you control either Ren, who wallops opponents with a fly swatter, or Stimpy, who coughs up hairballs and snaps his towel at attackers, you must search the town for parts of the Mutate-O-Matic. This game contains six main stages plus several sub-levels of game play.



"A party at doggy jail! Oh joy!"

REN & STIMPY™ & © NICKELODEON

CD-ROMIX: Prime #1
CD-ROMIX!
PC CD-ROM
1 Player
Available: Now

This CD includes colorful graphics and full audio enhancements. You'll hear original, professionally recorded music, sound effects, and dialogue as you watch the story unfold on the computer screen. *Prime* contains more than 130 panels on over 60 screens. There's an autoplay feature that allows you to kick back and watch the multimedia comic book, or you can manually flip through the on-screen pages at your own pace. Watch Prime as he defends a group of high school girls, fights crime and drugs, and helps U.N. peacekeeping forces deliver food to starving people in Somalia.

"Hey! The hero guy sprung a leak—cool!"

PRIME™ & © MALIBU COMICS

Wario Land: Super Mario Land 3
Nintendo of America
Gameboy
1 Player
Available: Now

In this adventure, Wario—Mario's archrival, whom you met in *Super Mario Land 2*—is back. This is a four-meg, 40-level adventure that is jam-packed with puzzles to solve and obstacles which you must help Wario overcome. Along your quest, you can help Wario collect hats that give him special powers. Wario also needs to collect coins, keys, hearts, stars, and other items. *Wario Land* is an extralarge adventure with a battery backup feature. The quality of the graphics is very similar to that of *Super Mario Lands 1* and *2*, but the action is totally new and different.

C'mon, Wario, have a heart!

WARIO LAND™ & © NINTENDO OF AMERICA

Coming Soon...

According to Extreme Studios, comic book creator Rob Liefeld has signed a video game deal with Acclaim. In early '95, the company will release games starring Youngblood and other characters...Imagine being able to play all of your favorite Game Boy carts on the television screen. If you have the Super NES and the new Super Game Boy accessory, that's exactly what you can do. It's coming in June from Nintendo and works with all Game Boy carts...If you're a fan of puzzle games, you'll want to check out *Wild Snake* (Genesis/Super NES) and *Columns III* (Genesis)...*Virtua Racing*, also for the Genesis, will be the first cart to incorporate Sega's new SVP chip (Sega Virtua Processor). The graphics could make this cart one of the year's best sellers...Watch for Capcom's *Super Street Fighter II* for the Super NES and Genesis.

—Jason R. Rich

imprint will not be launched in June, as was previously announced; it has been postponed indefinitely and will premiere at a later date.

BLACKBALL COMICS
Blackball Comics #4 and *Radical Dreamer* #1 are both due in June. *Blackball Comics* has a Simon Bisley cover, round two of the Trencher/Mr. Monster brawl by Keith Giffen and Michael T. Gilbert, and "Big Blown Baby" by Bill Wray. *Radical Dreamer* launches the character's first story arc, set to last six issues.

BONEYARD PRESS
Son of Kill Image, the sequel to last year's popular satire *Kill Image*, is slated to ship in June. It's written by Lance Polin and Hart D. Fisher, with art by Jason Karns. Fisher says that in his cameo appearance in the issue, he gets killed!...In August, Boneyard will adapt Howard Stern's Fartman for an ongoing, bimonthly comic series.

CLAYPOOL COMICS
Claypool, which is starting its second year of publication, will begin distributing its own comics. Claypool's products were originally distributed by Eclipse Comics. Claypool's current titles include *Elvira*, *Phantom of Fear City*, *Soulsearchers & Company*, and *Deadbeats*.

DEFIANT
In an attempt to further its goal of being "reader-friendly," Defiant will publish Spanish-language editions starting in May, the first of which will be *Prudence & Caution* #1-#4.

EXPRESS PUBLICATIONS
The Art of Zen Intergalactic Ninja Special #1 will be released in June. It'll have great pin-up work by the likes of Jae Lee, Sam Kieth, Mike Mignola, Frank Brunner, and more. Also that month, look for *Zen Intergalactic Ninja Summer Special: Video Warrior* #1. In this story, by writer Nat Gertler and artist Raff Ienco, Zen is trapped in a video game by an alien race.

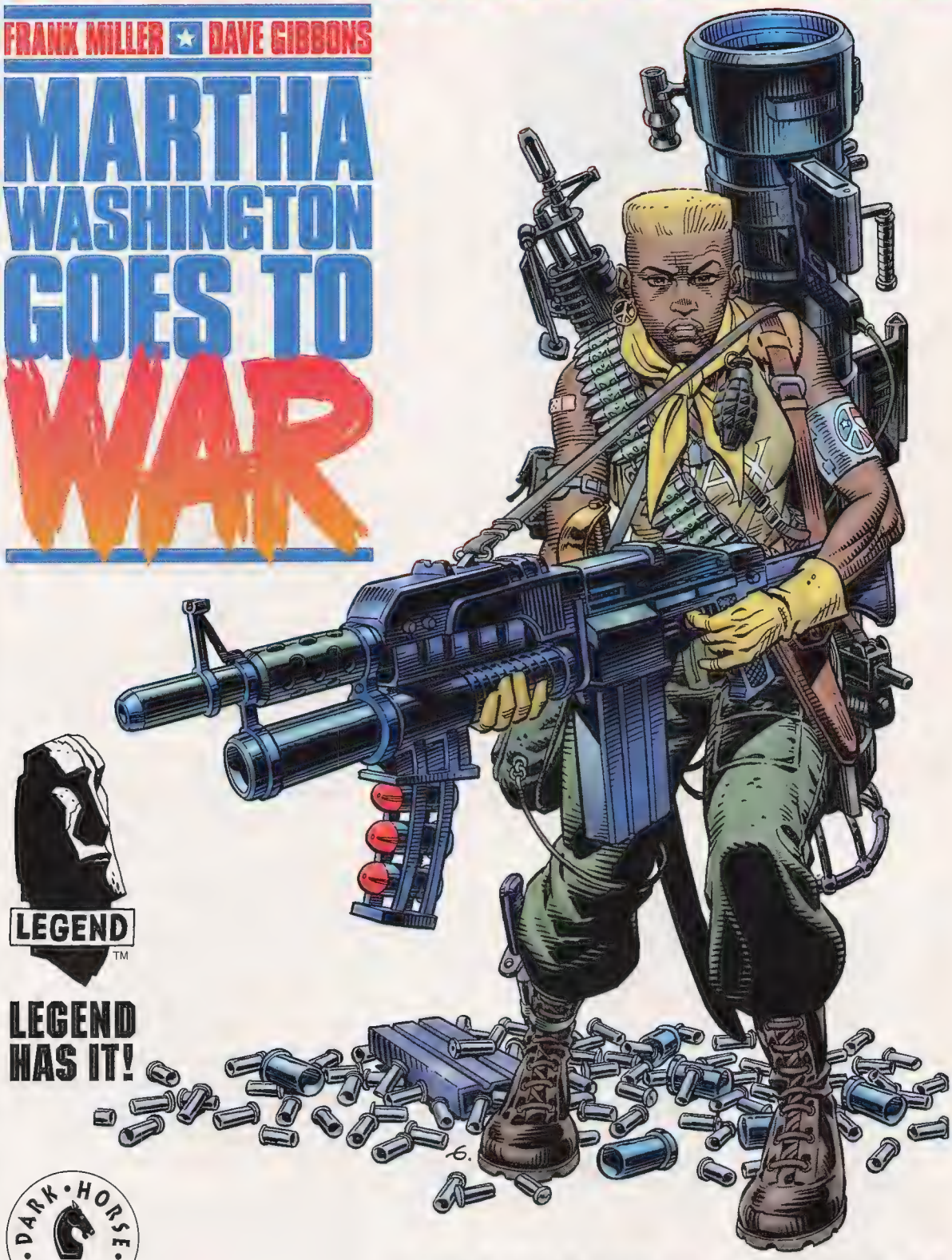
GLADSTONE
Gladstone is celebrating Donald Duck's 60th birthday with a double-sized *Donald Duck* #268, with stories by Carl Barks, William VanHorn, and Federico Pedrocchi.

HAMILTON COMICS
Mighty Morphin Power Rangers #1, solicited for June, has been postponed "due to licensing dif-

A GOOD SOLDIER FOLLOWS ORDERS.
A GREAT SOLDIER KNOWS WHEN TO IGNORE THEM.

FRANK MILLER ★ DAVE GIBBONS

MARTHA WASHINGTON GOES TO WAR



LEGEND HAS IT!

DARK HORSE COMICS®

THE FIRST SALVO HITS IN MAY.

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This Month in History

Historic comic book events that took place in the month of JUNE.

1938 ***Action Comics* #1:** This classic features the debut of Superman in the 12-page lead story, which details his origin, establishes his alter ego, Clark Kent, and introduces Lois Lane.

1950 **Kefauver Investigation:** A U.S. Senate committee chaired by Sen. Estes Kefauver concludes its hearings on the effects of comics on juvenile delinquency. This investigation led directly to the institution of the Comics Code.

1959 **George Reeves:** The actor who played Superman in the 1950s *Adventures of Superman* TV series dies, sparking considerable controversy. Although the circumstances surrounding his death led some to believe it was murder, the official coroner's verdict was suicide.

1973 ***Amazing Spider-Man* #121:** Peter Parker's girlfriend, Gwen Stacy, is killed by the original Green Goblin during a fight with Spider-Man.

1982 ***The Incredible Hulk* TV show:** This popular show ends its four-year run on CBS. Though the adaptation differed from the comic series, it endures as Marvel's most successful live-action TV show to date.

1985 ***Swamp Thing* #37:** Hellblazer John Constantine makes his first appearance in this issue and teaches Swamp Thing about his elemental abilities.

—W.A.C. and M.S.

ficulties with Saban Entertainment," according to the publisher. Hamilton will resolicit once the difficulties are ironed out.

HARVEY COMICS

Flintstones #1, by Michael Kirschenbaum and Rusty Haller, ships in June. It'll contain a story in which Fred serves as Bedrock's mayor, plus a parody of *Beverly Hills 90210*. That same month, look for *Hanna-Barbera Presents* #1: *Wacky Races*, featuring Penelope Pitstop, Dick Dastardly, Muttley, and Peter Perfect.

IMAGE COMICS

Rob Liefeld has expressed interest in creator Dave Cockrum's Futurians team. Not much more is known other than that the two creators have talked. More news as it develops...Liefeld has also bought the comic book and animation rights to the '70s science fiction TV show *Battlestar Galactica*. No definite plans have been made yet, but we'll let you know when there are...The Jim Lee/Chris Claremont collaboration on *WildC.A.T.s* will continue in issue #13. Look for it in August...Steve Oliff's *Armature* one-shot will ship in the fall, not in June, as was previously reported.

KITCHEN SINK PRESS

In June, look for the special oversized *Barney Google and Snuffy Smith: 75 Years of an American Legend* book, which is priced at $16.95...*Kitchen Sink Press: The First 25 Years*, a heavily illustrated year-by-year look at the company, ships in July.

MALIBU COMICS

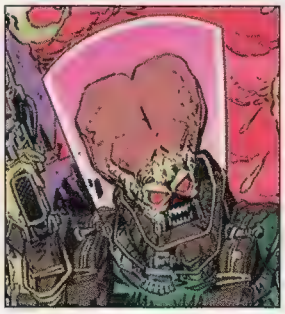
To celebrate its first anniversary, *Prime* #13 will expand to 48 pages and feature a special Freex crossover that con-

WIZARD Looks Back...

Mars Attacks

In 1897, H.G. Wells wrote *War of the Worlds*, which brought the possibility of an alien invasion from Mars to the forefront of the American consciousness. Orson Welles added to the fright in 1938, when his adaptation of the novel for radio sent thousands of people into a panic. The story was later filmed in 1953.

While people have been entranced by stories of invading Martians for decades, perhaps no version was quite as visually or viscerally disturbing as the tale of devastation told in the 1962 Mars Attacks card series produced by Topps Cards.



In those 55 cards, created and written by Woody Gelman and Len Brown and painted by Norm Saunders, Martians mercilessly destroyed civilization. The set contained so much violence and bloodshed, in fact, that it caused an uproar upon its release. Because of the complaints the company received, Topps halted distribution before the entire country received shipments. As a result, the cards are quite collectible, with sets selling for $2,000.

Topps is going to renew the Martians' reign of terror in the upcoming *Mars Attacks* comic book series, debuting in May. This five-issue series is written by Keith Giffen and illustrated by Charles Adlard; it also has a backup feature written by Len Brown and penciled by Giffen. The mini-series is a retelling of the Mars Attacks cards' story, while the backup feature reveals the true reasons for the attack.

Giffen explains his take on the invasion story: "I want to give the Martians sort of a modern warfare approach. It's quite a while before everyone realizes that the attack is of extraterrestrial origin. It just seems like the world has gone mad."

"There are two levels of stories," series editor Dwight Jon Zimmerman says. "One is the overall Martian invasion, but at the same time, we get a lot of human drama. By the second issue, we begin to see the true onslaught of the mutated gigantic insects [created in issue #1], and we see the playing out of the Martian death squads.... It's genocide, pure and simple." The Martians, warns Zimmerman, are out to destroy mankind, and they're prepared to do so with overwhelming force.

How does humanity fight back? With nuclear submarines, which are effective against the Martians, who are unaccustomed to functioning underwater, having come from a desert planet. "We wanted to do a '90s take on an alien invasion," Zimmerman explains. "We wanted to make it very plausible."

Giffen has been enthusiastic about the new project since before it even began. "I'm one of those people who as a kid loved those [Mars Attacks] cards and have held on to them to this day. The idea of a Mars Attacks comic is one that had always been in the back of my mind. I wanted to do this very badly; it's sort of a dream project."

Giffen's energy was readily apparent to artist Adlard. "Keith is great to work with," Adlard says. "He actually draws plots; they are sketches, like little Harvey Kurtzman drawings. Keith is obviously having fun with it, and it's sort of rubbing off."

—W.A.C. and M.S.

Mars Attacks ™ & © Topps Comics Inc.

You Know Deep Down You May Not Survive.

**Eye Of The Beholder.
The First
ADVANCED DUNGEONS
& DRAGONS®
Game For The SNES.**

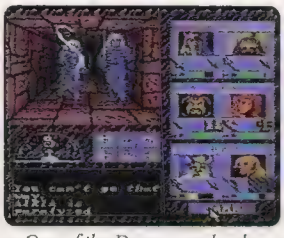
There is a criminal conspiracy hiding in the Waterdeep sewers. Well, at least that's what legend says. As evidence of its truth: some rather imposing locks and traps, slashing skeletons, flashing swords and sizzling spells.

Based on this limited knowledge, it would seem the only thing to do is find these criminals and destroy them. As you aspire to the roles of High Priest, Lord, Paladin, Ranger Lord, Wizard or Master Thief, you and your party will experience face-to-face combat and encounters with an intensity only AD&D® role playing affords.

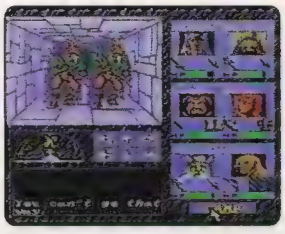
A 3-D graphical point of view makes the fantasy seem real. The graphics are hotter than you know what. And the plots and subplots are complex enough to challenge even the most avid AD&D fanatic.

But even when you think you see the light at the end of the sewers, the Eye Of The Beholder awaits.

While finding the key to unlock the spider's double door, you learn the status of "Airia".



One of the Drow guards who has found your party swings his whip to paralyze "Airia".



When four Kenku soldiers block your path, you have a fantastic battle on your hands.

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GAMER'S GUIDE

Welcome to *Wizard*'s new minicolumn featuring brief reviews of superhero- and comic-related role-playing games. Our first review is of the Marvel Super Heroes game, produced by TSR Inc.

Marvel Super Heroes is a real kick. Few things are more enjoyable than slagging Ultron's internal circuitry, going toe to toe with the Hulk, or ruining Magneto's latest scheme. Simulating these and other delightful diversions is easy with this game.

The system—that is, the rules—is not at all difficult to learn; it's clear that TSR wanted to make this game playable for everybody. Creative gamemasters will have no problem modifying the rules to produce a more complex game if they want one. It's very easy to produce original adventures and creatures; this is a great game with which to improvise. Players can use one of the established Marvel characters (a great number of these are supplied, including villains) or characters of their own creation. Many powers and talents are available.

One of the best things about this game is that it is well supported—a lot of material is available for players, material that fleshes out the basic rules and adds depth to the game. Numerous adventure modules have been published for gamers to buy, and most of them offer pretty interesting adventures. These modules are usually designed for specific heroes, but with a little imagination, they can be modified to suit a completely different group.

New volumes of *The Gamer's Handbook of the Marvel Universe* are available, featuring updated information on Marvel characters. (Thanos can be found in *Gamer's Handbook* #4, for those who want to dish out serious damage!) Furthermore, new characters and rules have appeared in many articles in TSR's *Dragon* magazine.

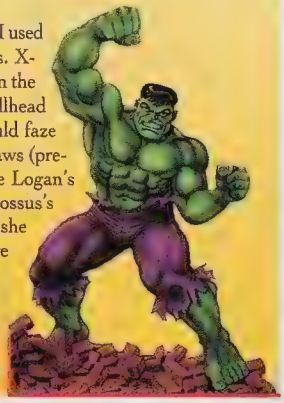
TSR has also produced "sourceboxes," which contain material excerpted from a larger sourcebook. These sourceboxes contain detailed information on Spider-Man, the X-Men, and Dr. Doom that even nonplayer comic fans would want to get their mitts on. The boxes, like all of the materials surrounding this game, sport plenty of artwork by Marvel artists, often reprinted from the comics themselves.

Another aspect of this game that I really appreciated was that it displayed an excellent understanding of the Marvel Universe on the part of the game designers. Many of the adventure modules are designed to fit into a particular spot in Marvel's comic book continuity. Marvel and TSR are negotiating what further products, if any, to release in the future.

By the way, my brother Jon and I used this game to settle the Iron Man vs. X-Men controversy which once raged in the pages of Magic Words. Alas, ol' Shellhead got his hide waxed; few X-Men could faze him, but Wolverine's adamantium claws (presuming the battle took place before Logan's recent skeletal problems...) and Colossus's strength (absorbed by Rogue, since she can reach an airborne Iron Man) were enough to take him out.

But then, there's always War Machine vs. the X-Men...

—Robert T. Bogley

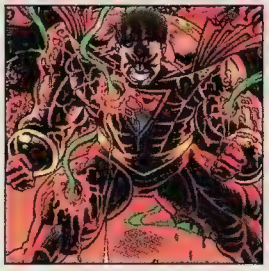


HULK ™ & © MARVEL ENTERTAINMENT GROUP

tinues in *Freex* #12. This June issue also ties into the upcoming *Ultraforce* series...Kurt Busiek's three-part Lady Killer story will begin in *Ultraverse Premiere* #4, which will be attached to *The Strangers* #13, shipping in June.

MARVEL COMICS

If you were wondering about what's gonna happen this year in the Spider-Man titles, Gary Guzzo, Marvel's publicity manager, hints, "There's a grand mystery climaxing in *Amazing Spider-Man* #400. We're not killing Peter Parker, but he's gonna wish we had..."...In June's *Fantastic Four* #391, the Black Panther triggers the creation of Fantastic Force. Also that month, look for *Marvels* #0, which features the eight-page Human Torch origin story that ran in *Marvel Age* #130 as well as sketches and designs by series artist Alex Ross. The foreword is by Kurt Busiek.



Prime's all set for the Freex crossover in Prime #13.

PRIME ™ & © MALIBU COMICS ENTERTAINMENT

MILESTONE MEDIA

The insane vigilante Deathwish is getting his own four-issue mini-series in late '94, courtesy of writer Adam Blaustein and artist J.H. Williams III...Blood Syndicate member Fade will also get his own four-issue mini-series in late '94. This one will be done by *Blood Syndicate*'s Ivan Velez Jr. and ChrisCross.

NOW COMICS

Married...With Children: Kelly Goes to Kollege #1 (of 3) ships in June. The Ivy League will never be the same!

REVOLUTIONARY COMICS

In April, Revolutionary is introducing a new line of books, Carnal Comics, which will cover the adult film industry. These adults-only books tell the true life stories of the stars of X-rated films. "These aren't just cheapie crank-'em-out magazines," says Jay Allen Sanford, Revolutionary's managing editor. "Our goal is to present beautiful and sexy literature, in the vein of *1,001 Arabian Nights*, *The Canterbury Tales*, and the like."

TOPPS COMICS

The five-issue *Victory* mini-series, which will star all the Kirbyverse characters, begins in June. This mini-series heralds the long-awaited return of Captain Victory, who will appear in his own series in late '94, courtesy of Steve Englehart and Vince Russell. Another *Victory* spin-off: *The Ninth Men*, starring Captain Glory, Bombast, and Night Glider, written by Dwight Zimmerman and penciled by Keith Giffen...A *Lone Ranger* mini-series by Joe R. Lansdale and Tim Truman, the team that produced the *Jonah Hex: Two-Gun Mojo* mini-series for DC's Vertigo imprint, has been tentatively scheduled for late '94.

VALIANT

Dan Jurgens and Jerry Ordway will supply the covers to the bookends *Chaos Effect* Alpha, a free book shipping in June, and *Chaos Effect* Omega, a $2.25 book shipping in July, which bracket Valiant's summer "Chaos Effect" crossover. The Omega book also contains a five-page Timewalker ministory. Ordway also inks the interior stories in both bookends, which are both written by Bob Layton and penciled by Bernard Chang. The covers to all 16 "Chaos Effect" crossover books will be inked by Layton. Highlights of the crossover include new powers for Dr. Mirage and Shadowman, as well as the first announced appearance of the mysterious Visitor.

VIZ COMICS

Viz will release issue #1of a five-issue *Nausicaä of the Valley of Wind Part IV* mini-series in June. This series is the penultimate installment in the *Nausicaä* saga.

WARP GRAPHICS

Elfquest: Hidden Years, Warp's flagship title, moves to monthly status with issue #11. In that issue, the title will return to more traditional, longer stories. A new art team, Brandon McKinney (*New Warriors*) and Craig Taillefer, debuts with #12, and Wendy Pini returns as cover artist with that issue...Warp has announced that *Elfquest: New Blood* writer/artist Barry Blair has joined the publisher as its managing editor. In addition to his editorial duties, Blair will continue to write and draw *New Blood*. ☆

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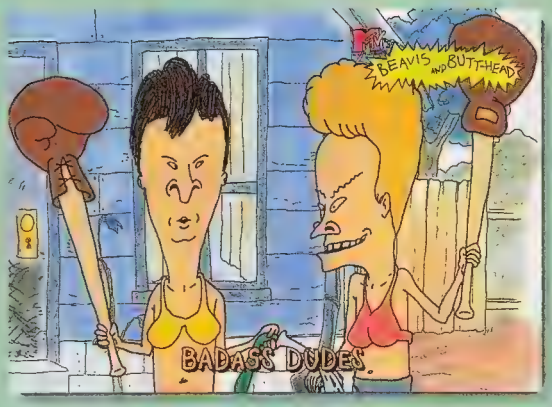
AND NOW, A PREPARED STATEMENT FROM BEAVIS AND BUTT-HEAD TO CARD LOVERS EVERYWHERE:



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150 CARDS FEATURING ARTWORK CREATED FROM ACTUAL SERIES ANIMATION CELLS WITH ADDITIONAL NEW ART AND TEXT.

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EXCLUSIVE FEATURES
FULL COLOR PHOTOS
COOL CONTESTS AND
THE BEST PRICE GUIDE IN THE
INDUSTRY

HE'LL TAKE MANHATTAN AND WHATEVER ELSE HE CAN GET!

SATAN'S SIX™

HELLSPAWN

#1

UNLEASHED FROM SATAN'S SIX ...*THIS* DEMON BITES BACK!

A 3-ISSUE LIMITED SERIES BEGINNING IN MAY

STORY BY *Len Kaminski & Scott Benson*

ART BY *John Cleary & Steve Montano*

COVER BY *Hilary Barta*

$2.50 and no @#%*&! plastic bag!

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I WAS A TEENAGE MUTANT

Borrowing from the original idea behind the X-Men and improving upon the concept of the New Mutants, Marvel launches Generation X, its newest Mutant title.

To some, it appears to be a calculated marketing ploy. To others, it is the natural outgrowth of a clearly visible market trend. Whichever opinion you subscribe to, the series was inevitable. This September, Marvel Comics will bring forth the latest in its ever-growing family of X-titles. Like the original *X-Men* series, *Giant-Size X-Men* #1, and *The New Mutants*, *Generation X* reflects the ever-evolving mood of the country.

The title will be written by Scott Lobdell, scribe of *Uncanny X-Men;* penciled by Chris Bachalo, lately of *Ghost Rider 2099;* and guided by Bob Harras, editor of the X-Men family of titles. The concept was developed by Lobdell, who was inspired by the original X-Men. "One of the most interesting aspects of the X-Men was the school aspect," Lobdell says. "What set them apart from all the other teams was that this was a school for people with powers who eventually would become X-Men, and become superheroes."

During the 30 years since their introduction, the X-Men grew up, changed members, and spun off several related teams. Lobdell, however, longed to return to a school environment.

Is this what Chamber will look like? You'll have to wait until September to see.

X-PLOits Then and Now

Writer Chris Claremont and artist Bob McCloud took the same approach some 11 years ago when they created the New Mutants, a group that was ostensibly the third generation of students to attend Xavier's School for Gifted Youngsters. The New Mutants starred in 100 issues of their own series before evolving into today's pro-active, hard-hitting X-Force team.

"I think that if you take [the young mutants] out of that school environment and make them superheroes right away, you have a problem," Lobdell says of the challenges which faced the writers of *New Mutants*. "All of a sudden they have to start sneaking out in the middle of the night, saving the world, and coming back before the headmaster finds they're gone."

Lobdell is asked about the difference between his writing for *Uncanny X-Men* and Fabian Nicieza's work for *X-Men*. "Fabian once described it as [this]: his stories revolve more around taking a character and pulling out their guts; mine is more getting the character to come straight on themselves, and kind of pulling them together. I think that is probably as distinct a difference as you can get." Having said that, Lobdell insists that he's more than a little uneasy about comparing himself with other popular X-writers, specifically Chris Claremont and Peter David. Lobdell followed Claremont on *Uncanny X-Men*—which Claremont had written for 17 years—and David on *X-Factor*.

"I had no time to feel trepidation," he says of *Uncanny X-Men* #286, his first X-Men issue. He was given two days to write 22 pages. "I had no time to worry about it. In

By Robert J. Sodaro

GENERATION X AND ALL ARTWORK AND CHARACTERS SHOWN ™ & © MARVEL ENTERTAINMENT GROUP INC.

the first year and a half I was involved with the X-Men, I had no time to freeze up; I had to do the work. At least, that's what the first five or six jobs I did were like."

He worked on *Uncanny* for quite a while before it actually sank in that he was writing the X-Men. "I've always had a tremendous amount of affection for the characters. It was like the beginning of any new relationship," he says. "It's exciting and new and wonderful. It was all sunshine and roses, one really cool job after another."

Lobdell may not have spent a lot of time worrying about the pressure, but that doesn't mean he didn't feel it. "When I was doing [Marvel's] *S.H.I.E.L.D.*, it pretty much didn't matter if a bad story squeezed by, but in a book read by practically everybody in the universe, I didn't feel I had the luxury to do bad stuff." Needless to say, Lobdell rose to the task, and has crafted some of the finest X-Men stories to appear in recent years.

Lobdell has high praise for his X-Men predecessors and colleagues. "I think it's impossible to underestimate the impact Chris Claremont has had on the entire comic book industry. Similarly, I think it is impossible to give enough credit to Bob Harras, [who contributed] to the growth and popularity of the books."

Since getting his X-start, Lobdell has written *Uncanny X-Men*, *X-Factor*, and *Excalibur*. However, he's concerned about diluting his output by overextending himself, and has cut his workload back to *Uncanny*, a few limited series, an occasional outing in *X-Men Unlimited*, and the upcoming *Generation X*.

School dAys

As readers of the regular X-titles already know, Professor Xavier assumed control of the Massachusetts Academy in *X-Men* #31, after the academy's superintendent, Emma Frost, aka the White Queen, fell comatose while battling the Sentinels. In *Generation X*, Xavier will finally reopen the school, establishing Sean (Banshee) Cassidy as co-headmaster. Assisting the esteemed Mr. Cassidy will be none other than former X-foe Emma Frost herself, whom Lobdell is planning to revive.

"In *Uncanny X-Men* #314, she comes out of her coma, and the first thing she does is check up on her students, who were brutally murdered by Trevor Fitzroy [in *Uncanny* #281 and #282]," Lobdell says. "When she originally took on the Hellions as students, she felt that her way was the best way to teach them how to use their powers. The bottom line is: her way didn't work. Ten teenage kids were killed specifically because she didn't teach them well enough." Since Xavier's students in X-Force survived and hers didn't, Frost makes amends by joining Xavier.

But will Frost really become a good guy? Not quite. "Emma doesn't become a nicer character at all. There will be nothing about

Preliminary sketches of the new team. From left to right: Husk, Skin, Jubilee, and M.

her which will be inconsistent [with the past]," he says. For example, in the crossover leading up to *Generation X*'s debut, the White Queen allows one of the young mutants to be kidnapped during the course of a battle in order to track the offenders to their lair.

Lobdell says that he's enjoying the dichotomy between former Interpol agent Banshee and his co-headmaster, the White Queen. "Basically, [Banshee is] about getting by and about being part of the system, being assimilated into the general public. He used to go to the Grand Ole Opry. On the other hand, you have Emma Frost, who's always been a very shady, manipulative character, wanting to go out and conquer the world with her group of young Hellions," the Massachusetts Academy students who were Frost's counterpart to Xavier's old New Mutants team.

The writer feels that the dynamic between the two headmasters will make for interesting stories. "Her response will be to always teach the kids to go for the throat. His response will be to say, 'That's not necessary.' Although he will train them to do it [her way], he'll also train them in every other alternative first."

"We're tired of the Cyclops and Jean Grey 'Barbie' and 'Ken'-type mutants... If you were Jean Grey and you were a mutant, you wouldn't have much to worry about; you can function in society. You can get by and be this hot überbabe, and no one would think twice." —Scott Lobdell

Some retailers fear that with the vast array of X-books already out there, *Generation X* will be lost in the shuffle—especially since there's a big alphabetical gulf between titles that begin with "G" and those that start with "X." Most of the top-selling mutant titles begin with the latter letter, including *X-Men* and *X-Factor*. Gary Guzzo, Marvel's publicity manager, says that Marvel is allaying this fear by encouraging retailers to rack all the mutant titles together.

But even if *Generation X* sits next to other X-titles on the shelves, Lobdell says that his book won't be a rehash of its fellow titles—he won't transplant new characters into old stories. "When we decided to get back to the basics with the X-Men and bring in the new class of young mutants...we decided we would separate it completely from the [X-Mansion] and place the school elsewhere." That's why *Generation X* will be set at the former Massachusetts Academy, now known as the Xavier School for Gifted Youngsters. (The former School for Gifted Youngsters, located at the X-Mansion, is now known as the Xavier Institute for Higher Learning.)

"We're going in different directions with this title," Harras warns. "This new group of students aren't poster-child mutants. Some of them are disfigured."

"We're tired of the Cyclops and Jean Grey 'Barbie' and 'Ken'-type mutants," Lobdell interjects. "You think, 'Oh, they're perfect.' If you were Jean Grey and you were a mutant, you wouldn't have much to worry about; you can function in society. You can get by and be this hot überbabe, and no one would think twice. [*Generation X* is] more about characters who cannot fit in and have no choice."

New Kids on the Block

There are reasons why Professor Xavier invited the *Generation X*ers to join his school. "Being an X-Man is a pretty dangerous line of work, as Doug Ramsey can attest," Lobdell says, referring to the New Mutant who met his untimely demise in *New Mutants* #60.

According to Lobdell, an excellent mutant power might be the ability to crunch numbers in one's head—but one doesn't need to go to Xavier's school to learn how to use that skill. On the other hand, someone like *Generation X*'s Penance, who has rock-hard skin, needs to be trained to cope with her unique ability. "There's an issue where she passes out," Lobdell reveals. "Banshee goes to lift her up and almost slices his hands off. This is a character who needs to learn how to function in society."

By this criteria, mutants with insignificant powers probably won't be attending the school, although Harras wouldn't rule this possibility out entirely.

So who *is* Generation X? "We have seven brand-new characters," artist Bachalo states. "I created two, Scott created the other five, and I came up with the images for them. They all have new uniforms." While the creators are still working out the details of their characters, they did divulge some of what they've already established.

One character, Husk, has already been introduced, in the pages of *X-Force* #32. She is Paige Guthrie, Cannonball's younger sister, who stayed at home when her brother went off to make a future for himself with the New Mutants. Since Sam Guthrie's now a fugitive from the government along with the rest of X-Force, she thinks that he's thrown away his future. She wants to get it right this time and do her family proud. "She's very much obsessed with graduating from the school and becoming an X-Man and doing something her brother couldn't do," Lobdell says.

Husk's powers allow her to "rip" herself in two, thereby revealing a new form underneath. This form will be a different kind of creature or object each time Paige splits herself up; she has no control over what it might be. She'll retain each configuration for about an hour before returning to her human self.

Synch is a young black male from St. Louis. "We are going to try to do something really radical and introduce a young, black character into comics who isn't angry," Lobdell says. Synch is the most likely candidate for leadership, since he has a very Captain America-like quality about him.

Skin, one of Bachalo's creations, has total control over his skin, much like Medusa, the Inhuman, has total control of her hair. He looks something like a melted candle, although if he concentrates, he can assume his normal

The first generation of X-Men, and the man with the dream.

facial features. "He's a character who probably has about two or three feet of extra skin on his body, which is more than he needs. He can control that skin in any number of ways, the same way normal skin can change pigmentation or become callused and hard," Lobdell says. Unlike Mr. Fantastic, the late leader of the Fantastic Four, he can't stretch his bones, only his skin.

Mondo has the ability to absorb organic matter and to take on the features of whatever he absorbs. Should he absorb a tree, his mass increases, and he becomes harder and tougher. Lobdell says that Mondo is not experienced with inorganic matter yet, although it's something he'll practice with and eventually get better at assimilating.

Lobdell declines to say much about M other than that she's much more than she seems to be. Bachalo, M's creator, describes her as a very traditional superhero. "M is going to be more like a Supergirl kind of character. She's very strong, and that's about it. She's very beautiful." He adds that one of the group's foes is going to be related to M.

Next up is Chamber, who has the misfortune of having a bioblast power not unlike Bishop's. Unfortunately, the first time he used it, he blew out the entire center of his chest, disintegrating the flesh from his top jaw to his sternum. All that remains is a cascade of vile energy pouring from the cavity. As one might expect, he's not a particularly happy mutant.

Then there's Penance, whose powers are very bizarre. She can condense her body mass, transforming herself into a black onyx-like substance. According to her written character description, she has the mutant ability to absorb negative energy to the point where her body features become razor-sharp and diamond-hard.

The new characters will be joined by Jubilee. "Jubilee's addition into the group will be different from that other young teenage girl who was thrust into the New Mutants," Lobdell says, alluding to Kitty Pryde's short-lived demotion from the X-Men in *Uncanny* #168. "When Kitty Pryde was whining about being thrown into the 'X-babies,' I think in some way it degraded the rest of the characters in that particular book."

Jubilee decides that the school will help her be the best X-Man she can be. After all, the ability to shoot firecrackers pales in comparison with the powers of someone like Bishop, who can blast down walls, or Storm, who can command the sky with her fingertips. "Jubilee, with all the things that have been happening in recent months," Lobdell explains, "has come to the conclusion that if she is going to be an X-Man, which is something that she would like to be some day, she's really going to have to learn how to do it right."

The OriGiNALs vS. the NeWcoMeRs

Lobdell feels that one of the key differences between the original X-Men team and the newest generation of mutants is the social atmosphere which inspired their individual powers and characteristics. "If you look at the '60s and at the '90s, the '60s were all about hanging out, being yourself, and doing what you wanted. If you wanted your own set of wings, that would be cool and that would be hip. Now we're living in a society where, for lack of a better word, we're the walking wounded. How many peoples' parents are still together? Half the people I went to school with, which wasn't that long ago, are either single parents, were never married in the first place, divorced, or on their second marriages."

That's why, Bachalo says, *Generation X*'s characters are not as "pretty" as the first generation of X-Men. "A couple of them are very monstrous," he observes. "Scott's taken more of a grisly look at them."

But why did Lobdell take this approach? "You start out with Superman, the godfather of all superheroes, with the ability to do pretty much anything," he explains. "If you create this big family tree, the farther you get, the more you have to come up with powers that are different and unusual... Until somebody comes by and reinvents that wheel."

Which is what Lobdell and Bachalo feel that they're on the verge of doing. "We're going to try to take a little bit different, and maybe a more progressive, look at the characters," Bachalo says. "Instead of having a group book, Scott wants to focus more on the individual characters."

Lobdell notes that since these are new characters, it's easier for him to talk about who they aren't rather than who they are. "If you ask me how Storm would react if Magneto killed Forge in front of her, I could say, 'Well, this is what's going to happen, that's what's going to happen,' but these are brand-new characters, and it's going to be a brand-new milieu for X-Men stories. Until we get there, I don't think that either Chris or I can make any predictions."

He flatly says that the team won't be fighting the Sentinels, the Hellfire Club, or any of the standard X-Men villains. *Generation X* is about a school where mutants learn how to utilize their powers fully and interact with humans, not where they train to fight supervillains.

By that same token, Lobdell says that while some of the X-Men will probably show up in the book from time to time, it won't be a regular event. "I can tell you that Wolverine isn't going to show up anytime soon," the writer quips. He feels that the group should stand on its own merits, not on the strength of guest appearances.

The X-TeeN TeaM

Bachalo, *Generation X*'s penciler, has had a significant amount of input into the series. "Scott and I have been talking a lot," he says. "I can't say I'm directly involved with the plotting; what he's been doing is calling me up and bouncing a few ideas off me to see what I think. As far as coming up with story-

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lines, I haven't been directly involved with that. I just might add an idea here and there."

Bachalo, who penciled the *Death: The High Cost of Living* mini-series and *Children's Crusade* bookend issues for DC Comics, recently completed a four-year stint on DC's *Shade, The Changing Man*. He has also penciled Marvel's *X-Men Unlimited* #1, *Ghost Rider Annual* #1, and *Ghost Rider 2099*, which he gave up with issue #3 to concentrate on *Generation X*. "I wanted to put all my efforts into *Generation X*," he says. Lobdell and Marvel approached the artist in April 1993, right after he finished *X-Men Unlimited* #1. "They've been waiting around for me to finish up with my other commitments to get started on this."

When asked what it felt like to be thrust into the limelight of an X-book and become an "overnight" sensation, Bachalo replies modestly: "It's very flattering. I haven't actually thought about it much because I'm very much removed from that limelight and that life, I think. I sit here in my studio by myself. I don't feel that, for the most part; I rely on friends and people I work with. A couple of my friends said to me, 'Oh wow, you're getting real hot now.' I replied, 'Oh, really?' I have no idea."

Harras, who's seen a number of X-artists rise to fame and cash in on their popularity elsewhere, is very philosophical about the way that working on an X-title affects a creator's reputation. "I'm very happy with the people currently working on the titles. I think I have a commitment from them, because I believe that you form a contract of sorts with the readers," he says. That's why Harras demands only the very best from his crew, and that's why he's more interested in nonviolent, character-driven stories than in endless parades of slam-bang action which lack plot development.

To this end, Harras says that over the coming year, the X-titles will resolve a number of ongoing plots, including Cyclops's "unusual" family tree, the Shi'ar Empire's occupation of the Kree galaxy, and some of the X-Men's staple "future history" stories.

When asked how many more X-titles the comic market could bear, Harras says that as long as people keep buying them, Marvel will keep publishing them. "I don't think there're too many out there yet," he says. "We're very comfortable with the number we have. A few regular series and a bunch of limited series is just fine.... If we had monthly Gambit, Bishop, Rogue series, et cetera, that would be too many books."

Lobdell asserts that it would be foolish for the X-family *not* to grow. "It's like saying to Madonna, 'Don't you think you've put out enough albums? OK, so they sell millions and millions each time; don't you think that maybe you should just stop recording songs?' Or telling Stephen King, 'You know, Steve, the first five books on the best sellers list were okay, but now you're kind of pushing it.' It just seems like an odd question..."

He argues that each X-book is worthwhile because each one contains different and interesting characters. For example, the dynamics between *Excalibur*'s Captain Britain, Meggan, and Phoenix are vastly different from those of *X-Men*'s Beast, Cyclops, and Psylocke, Lobdell says. As he discusses the large X-family, he refers to X-Force as "Robin Hoods" and X-Factor as government-sanctioned mutants. "I think we will know the second there are too many X-books out there," Lobdell concludes.

Which leaves us with the future, and *Generation X*'s part in it. "I see the X-Men as the light at the end of the tunnel," Lobdell says. "They are the goodness in a dark world, because they have that moral center about them. The *Generation X* mutants, on the other hand, are starting out at the other end of the tunnel. They don't see the light yet. But they are going to make their way towards it, for better or for worse." ☆

Robert J. Sodaro is a freelance writer based in Connecticut.

The new school and its headmasters: Banshee and Emma Frost.

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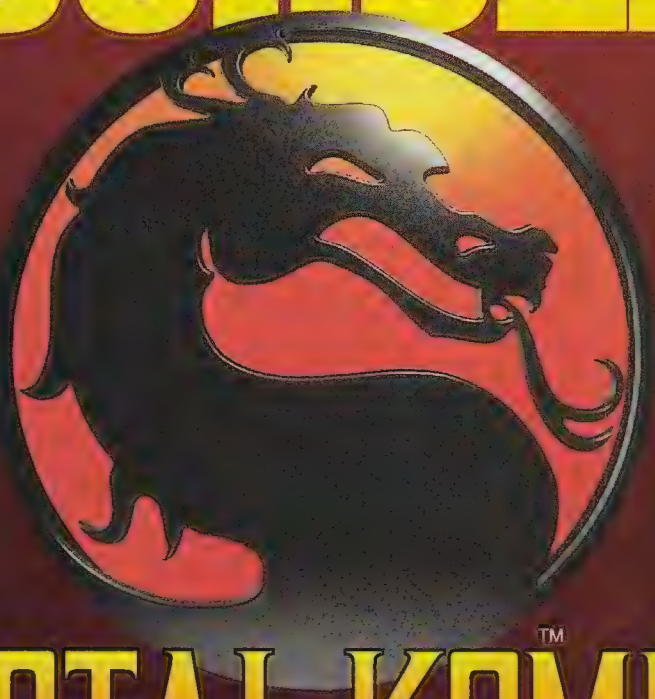

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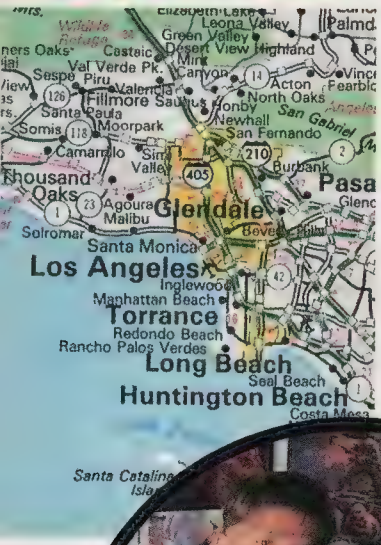

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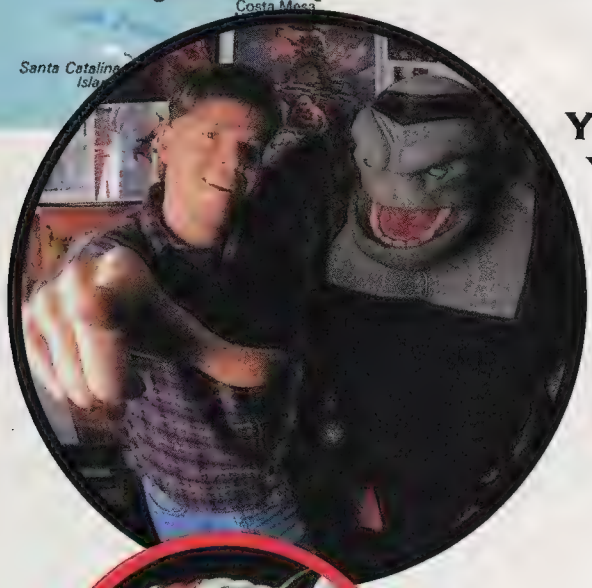

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For a list of winners, available after July 22, 1994, send a stamped, self-addressed envelope to Party to the Extreme Winners, c/o Wizard Press, 151 Wells Ave., Congers, NY 10920-2064, or just watch future issues of *Wizard*!

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With the Green Lantern Corps destroyed at the hands of Hal Jordan, what does the future hold for DC's last Emerald Gladiator?

In Darkest Night...

By Patrick Daniel O'Neill

"It's a new guy, a new costume. Hopefully, what will make this guy different from all other Green Lanterns is that there are no other Green Lanterns now," explains *Green Lantern* writer Ron Marz, who helped develop DC Comics's newest Emerald Gladiator. "He's the only one, he's unique...

"I think [that] was a big part of why we did what we did: to make the character unique again. I think one of the things that hamstrung Green Lantern in the past was that there were virtually unlimited duplicates of him with virtually the same power; they just happened to look like walking sponges or whatever. We wanted to get back down to one guy, one ring, and play this as something quite powerful and unique."

Although Marz acknowledges that the concept of 3,600 Green Lanterns is fascinating, he thinks it became a problem in recent years. "I think the Green Lantern Corps was almost a Pandora's Box; once [the creators] opened it and showed you all the other Green Lanterns and had them in the book on a fairly regular basis, the readers expected to see them."

But how is the new ring wielder, Kyle Rayner, different from the Hal Jordan GL we've been reading about for the past 35 years?

"Kyle Rayner is much younger, from a different generation than Hal. His perspective is quite a bit different," Marz answers. "We're dealing with someone who is young, energetic, and completely inexperienced. I think that will be one of the more intriguing aspects of the book: this guy, to a large extent, doesn't know what he's doing, [or] what the ring is capable of. Those are things he has to learn, little by little.

"Maybe this version of Green Lantern will be more accessible to the readers, because there is not the vast amount of continuity-laden material behind him: the Guardians, the rest of the Corps, and all that stuff. We'll be able to really concentrate on Green Lantern: the book is called *Green Lantern*, not *Green Lantern and A Bunch of Other Guys Who Have the Same Costume and A Bunch of Little Blue Guys.*"

Artist Darryl Banks, who signed on with *Green Lantern* #50, had a hand in deciding what kind of person Kyle Rayner would be. "We wanted to come up with an occupation for Kyle, and amongst them was commercial artist," he says. "I voted for that one, giving lots of reasons why I thought it would be different, and [saying] that I could provide some input on things he would do in his life and with the ring that were different from what we'd seen before."

Banks is a longtime *Green Lantern* reader who has wanted to draw the character since before he turned pro. After stints at Innovation and Millennium, he was hired by DC to draw *L.E.G.I.O.N.*, still hoping for a shot at the Emerald Gladiator. "I wanted to do *Green Lantern*. I wondered, 'How many years do I have to be with DC before I get a shot at *Lantern*?' I didn't know that one of the assistant editors for *L.E.G.I.O.N.* was also the assistant for *Green Lantern*. They were looking at my work the entire time. I was constantly expressing interest, and they were waiting for an opening, but I didn't know that."

But he was certainly prepared. "Kyle almost got a hand-me-down costume," Banks explains. "For years now, before I worked for DC, I've been coming up with Green Lantern costumes, because I've always wanted to draw the character. They were actually Green Lantern Corps costumes I had come up with. Going in, I thought Hal was just going to get a new look."

Green Lantern editor Kevin Dooley has been reading about the stalwart hero for even longer than Banks, and that reading has helped him draw some conclusions. "I've been reading Green Lantern since 1959, in *Showcase* #22, and upon reading [the character's older issues] again, I noticed there was no learning process. Hal got the ring in that first story, and later in the same issue, he was able to use the ring as if he'd had it for eons.

"That was a part of the era, of course. You want the excitement right away, without the learning process," Dooley notes.

Green Lantern and all artwork ™ & © DC Comics

A little blue guy hands Kyle Rayner a hokey green ring...and suddenly things change dramatically.

"With this Green Lantern, you'll see the learning process. Kyle is alone, and has to figure out how to use the ring—[and] its parameters, its limitations, if any—by himself. There're no Guardians to guide him...even to give him the rules to follow. There are no rules—just Kyle's own sense of right and wrong."

Dooley is quite clear on the differences between Hal and Kyle. "Hal started as a responsible guy, who knew right and wrong; there were no gray areas. He knew how to face fear," he points out. "Kyle's a freelance artist. One thing he has that Hal didn't is a vivid imagination. I always thought a person with [less] willpower but a stronger imagination could come up with more ideas faster.

"I've challenged Ron: he can't use the same thing twice. He wanted to use a sledgehammer a second time, and I told him no. We talked about it a while, and came up with three to five things that were much cooler than a sledgehammer. Kyle will be a Green Lantern from whom you'll get the unexpected."

But couldn't all this have been done with Hal Jordan? No, Dooley argues. "Even if we had made Hal Jordan the only Green Lantern, to get the kind of character we have with Kyle, we would have had to change Hal more than we changed him for 'Emerald Twilight.' Hal would have had to become a completely different person."

Many longtime *Green Lantern* fans feared that the book would turn "dark" with the advent of the new ring wielder. Dooley assures these fans that that fear is unfounded. "Kyle will not be 'grim 'n' gritty.' Starting with #51, *Green Lantern* is such an optimistic book; Kyle is full of positivism and being a hero and doing stuff. He likes to help people. He's not a grim 'n' gritty guy."

Of course, no character exists in a vacuum; each one has a world, a group of characters and concepts that grows around him. Kyle Rayner will have such a world, but longtime readers of *Green Lantern* won't find any familiar faces in it. "You won't be seeing any of the supporting characters from the Hal era," Marz says. "Carol Ferris is gone and forgotten, as far as I'm concerned. The rest of the Green Lantern Corps is gone; the vast majority of the Guardians are gone. We're starting over from square one with this guy. I'd like to use John Stewart for a little bit, just to get his reaction to everything.

"It makes sense that Hal's old buddies would be interested in who this new Green Lantern is, but I'd rather look forward. To me, that's detail stuff from the past," Marz admits. "I think there's a lot of interest in that from the traditionalists, but, in the overall readership, I don't know how many people are even familiar with Hal's supporting cast. It's a fine line you have to tread: making sure you don't step on anything from the past, and also making sure you don't obsess on that stuff so much that you turn off new readers."

For the moment, Kyle's closest ties are to his girlfriend, Alex, who will exit the book as of #54. "She's really his anchor right now," Marz notes. "Kyle doesn't have that many friends; he's something of a loner, and when Alex is removed from his life, he's thrown into the deep end of the pool without a life preserver."

Marz is aware that jettisoning the sole major supporting character so quickly could be a problem, but he says that he's prepared for the shift. "By the time she's gone, the reader will have learned to care about Alex, because she plays a substantial role in the stories through #54," he says. "The great concern on my part was to play up their relationship as realistically as possible. These people are very comfortable with each other.

"I want to show that, in a lot of respects, Kyle really needs her. She's the one who kicks him in the butt when he's doing something stupid, who whips him into shape and gets him to be more responsible now that he has this great burden to bear. Because of that responsibility, she is taken away from him—directly because Kyle has the ring, and people who want the ring want to go through her to get it."

Although his initial adventures take place on the West Coast, Kyle will soon be making his home in the Big Apple. "Once Alex is gone and Kyle is confronted with the reality that he's walking around with this ultrapowerful weapon on his finger, he knows that it isn't all fun and games, it's deadly business," Marz states. "He'll go from there to *Zero Hour*, which will take him out into space for the first time, and then he'll relocate to New York, where we'll establish him. Kyle will have reached a certain level of maturity, and then will build a supporting cast. About that time, he'll be involved with the Titans as well."

But isn't DC rushing the new Green Lantern by thrusting him into this summer's important continuity-fixing *Zero Hour* mini-

Kyle, an optimistic new hero (left), quickly put the ring and his artistic skills together to develop a new look for the Green Lantern costume (below).

"We'll be able to really concentrate on Green Lantern: the book is called *Green Lantern*, not *Green Lantern and A Bunch of Other Guys Who Have the Same Costume and A Bunch of Little Blue Guys*."

series? "Getting him into *Zero Hour* wasn't my decision. I haven't actually been told all that much, because they're being very close-lipped about it," Marz muses. "Kevin and I are the only people who are inside this guy's head, and know how he'll react in different situations. Now we have to turn him over to other writers for *Zero Hour*, and that gives me some concern. I think Kevin will stay on top of it."

But Kyle Rayner won't be totally divorced from the rest of the DC Universe. The last *GL* issue before *Zero Hour*, #55, will feature a visit from Alan Scott, the original Green Lantern. "Alan will shed a lot of light on where the ring came from, who the Guardians are, and all the information Kyle is unaware of," Marz reports. Then comes *Green Lantern* #0, in the same month when every other DC title goes with #0. "I've been told that #0 will be a stand-alone story [which] deals with Kyle meeting Hal on Oa. At that point, we'll reveal the true fate of the Guardians," Marz says.

Not only is the man holding the ring different now, but so is the ring itself. There have been two major changes in the ring's limitations: it no longer has the "necessary impurity" that made it ineffective against the color yellow, and it no longer needs to be recharged once every 24 hours. That doesn't mean its power is limitless, however.

"When we decided to make these changes, we thought one of the most arbitrary facets of the concept was the 24-hour charge on the ring," Marz explains. "That seemed like a hackneyed way to deal with it. Now the ring has a finite charge. You can expend it all in one huge blast—blow a planet out of space—or you can do little, tiny things with it, and it'll go for weeks at a time.

"Kyle is completely unaware of this. In his experience so far, the ring just keeps going and going, like the Energizer Bunny. He'll get into a situation with Major Force, an old Captain Atom villain, where he's just kicking the living hell out of him, when, all of a sudden, the ring just gives out. That's it; no more. Obviously, it's quite a shock to Kyle."

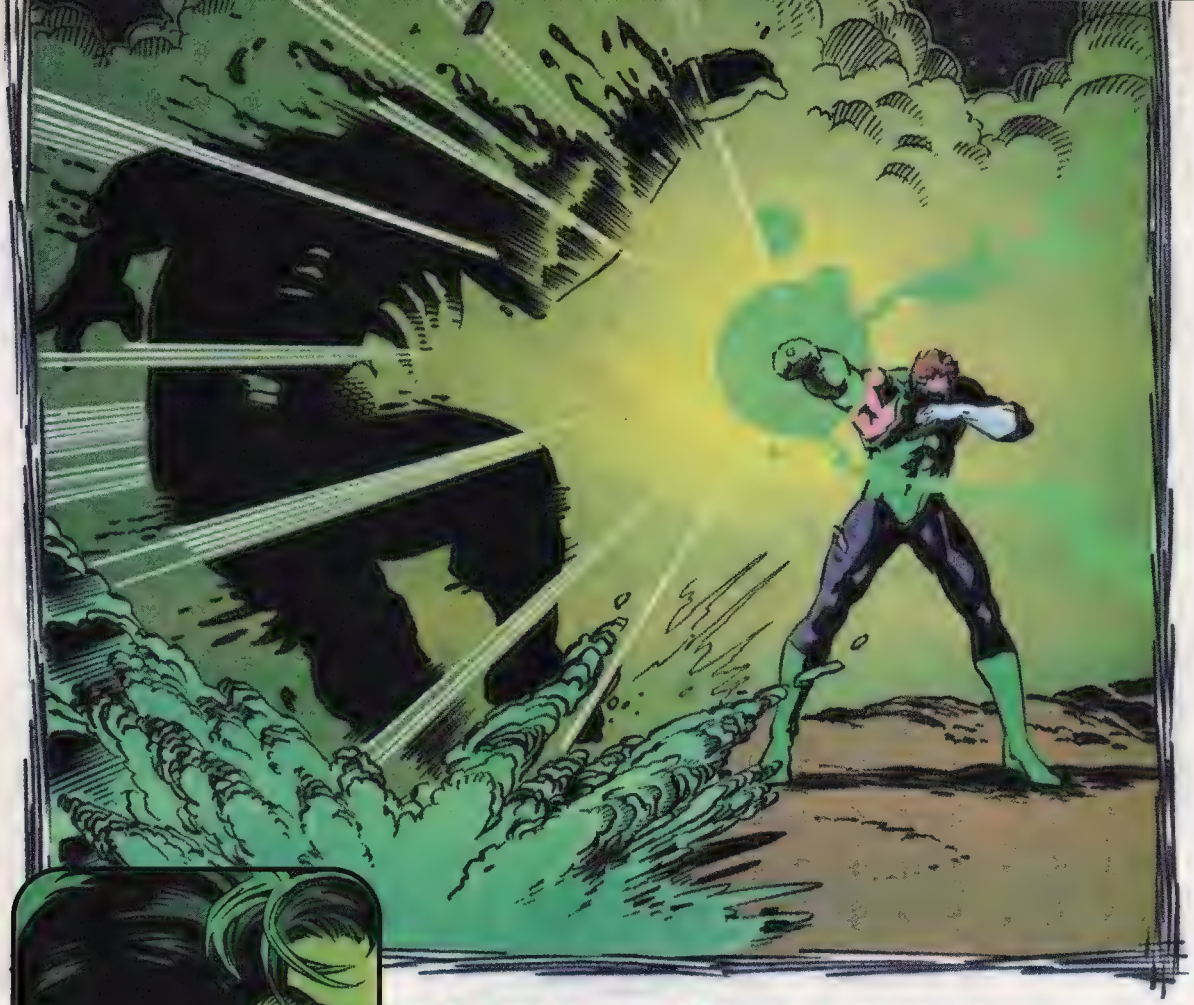
Obviously, a power ring without power is not much good. Kyle Rayner needs a power battery. "He will have a battery by #55. It'll be a little more involved than somebody just coming up and handing him a battery. We start hinting at it in #52. He'll have a battery, and a method of recharging his ring," Marz acknowledges.

Kyle will definitely use his ring differently from Hal. "One of the things that was discussed when I first came on the book was, 'Here's the most powerful weapon in the universe, and we got guys making giant boxing gloves with it,'" Marz laughs. "Virtually anybody could come up with something better than that. This thing was handed to you, and it's dependent on your willpower...I think you could do better than a boxing glove or giant fist. We want to make the ring's power more visual. We want to take the cartoony nature out of it, to be a little more concrete with what he comes up with for the ring.

"I would like to establish some ground rules for what you can and can't do with the ring, but we haven't nailed it down yet," Marz continues. "The ring is sort of like Dr. Strange's powers: what can he do, what can't he do? Strange is one of those characters it's hard to get a handle on, because in any situation, he can do anything he wants. The ring, to some extent, is like that. Right now, we're dealing with it by saying the ring is completely bound by the willpower and imagination of the bearer. It's the bearer's responsibility to maintain concentration on what he's doing. The more you do it, the easier it gets."

The fan reaction to the "Emerald Twilight" storyline that wrote out Hal Jordan as a Green Lantern is, to say the least, mixed. After all, the story depicted a longtime standby of the DC Universe murdering his comrades and mentors. Sales are up, but many older readers are outraged.

"I think it was to be expected that the



After defeating the Corps one member at a time, and taking each member's ring to increase his power (above), Hal Jordan murdered his friend and mentor, Kilowog (top).

"I don't view Hal as a maniac or crazed killing machine; I view Hal as a broken man whose situation was finally too much to bear," explains Marz.

old-time fans would be pissed off by 'Emerald Twilight.' I'd be a fool to think there wouldn't be people hacked off about it," Marz says. "My concern isn't so much losing a core readership we could build on, but that we lost people who really cherish this book and don't want to have any part of the new version. That bothers me."

Marz says that he was given a rough blueprint of the plot, and he did the best he could to follow it and remain true to Hal's character. "I was given a task—this is what we're doing in *Green Lantern* #48 through #50, and this is where we're going to end up—by the powers that be at DC, and I did what I thought was right with it. I don't want to hurt anybody's feelings or step on anybody's toes about it.

"The outline I was given for 'Emerald Twilight' was a few pages; there was no concrete detail," he continues. "It was, '#48 deals with Coast City and the Guardians coming down on Hal and putting the screws to him; #49 is Hal on his way to Oa and dealing with the Green Lanterns placed in his way.' Truthfully, #50 was the most wide open, the one [featuring] more of me than either of the others."

So was turning Hal into a villain always in the plan? "I don't know if the word 'villain' ever even came up," Marz replies. "'Less-than-benevolent force' was closer to the direction we wanted to go in. We wanted a clean slate, and we thought that kind of character turnaround would lead a path to that and generate a lot of interest. Nobody at any point came down and said, 'You have to turn Hal into a raving lunatic,' and I hope that's not what we did.

"I tried to portray Hal—particularly in #50—as a man caught in an impossible situation, who knows that he is falling down

a well and he can't get out. I don't view Hal as a maniac or crazed killing machine; I view Hal as a broken man whose situation, the burden he's carried all these years—service and obedience to the Guardians—was finally too much to bear. It was his personal life over duty and honor...and he wasn't allowed to make the choice."

Likewise, Dooley knows that DC took a risk by so radically altering a classic character. "There are never guarantees in this business. Sales on *Green Lantern* were below 40,000 at one point," he reports. "Something had to be done. Mike Carlin, Denny O'Neil, Archie Goodwin, Paul Levitz, and I all sat around: 'Superman had his chance, Batman had his chance...what are we going to do with Green Lantern to create some excitement?'

"[Former *GL* writer] Gerard Jones and I talked for hours and days for ideas. We came up with something [involving the Zamarons], we proposed it, and they said, 'This will not create excitement. Who cares if the Zamarons come back? Even fewer people than are currently reading *Green Lantern*, that's who.' 'Put Hal into a new costume.' 'Who cares?' It had to be an intriguing story, an extension of the character and his situation now."

Marz knows that it can be hard for people who have spent their lives reading about a character to accept radical change in that character. "I hope the people who were so attached to Hal will [continue to] read the book for five or six months, and give us a shot at impressing them enough that they'll want to stick around," he says. "And that's not a sales concern; that's from the point of view that I would like to keep entertaining the people who have always enjoyed this book."

Although major storylines such as "Emerald Twilight" tend to boost sales, the numbers generally fall back to where they were before the event. Often, they sink below previous levels. But Dooley is confident that that won't happen with *Green Lantern*. Why?

"I don't think we're going to see a collapse in sales after 'Emerald Twilight,' because the 'event' isn't over," he says. "The event for Hal is over; now we have the event for Kyle—with a new Green Lantern, and new things to be done. Almost every issue, Kyle will learn about the ring, the same way I found out about the ring when I first read *Green Lantern* 35 years ago. The excitement will continue. It won't be event after event, but a continuing stream of new revelations.

"Part of our job is to keep the innovations coming: Hal is gone, there's a whole new set of rules, [and so] readers come with us to learn the rules," Dooley sums up. "If you ever liked *Green Lantern* before, you will like this *Green Lantern*. All the elements are there, but they've been made fresh." ☆

Power trip

Although it's supposedly the last, "Emerald Twilight" is not the first time that Hal Jordan has lost his power ring, voluntarily or otherwise. Actually, in the 34-plus years Hal has been a Green Lantern, he's lost his jade jewelry more often than he'd care to remember.

Hal first lost his power in *Green Lantern* (second series) #3, in which the Weaponeers of Qward found a way to steal his power battery. GL emerged victorious from the encounter, his ring intact.

In #11, the Guardians of the Universe briefly confiscated Hal's ring in a fake trial. Ironically, the backup story had hobo Bill Baggett finding the ring after Hal had removed it for a test, and unsuccessfully pitting his will against Hal's.

Hal fell prey to the criminal machinations of one "Barks" Ownley in #33, when the small-time crook managed to temporarily de-ring Hal. Then, in #40, Hal battled the Golden Age Green Lantern, Alan Scott, for possession of the ring. The ring was surrendered to the police in #46, but not before Hal mentally commanded it to free him shortly thereafter. Hal was thus able to prove

himself innocent of the crimes for which the Triple Play Gang had framed him.

In #56, the Guardians disbanded the Green Lantern Corps for the first time, believing it unequal to the task of protecting the galaxy. Alan Scott lost his magical power ring in #61. In #68, Hal quit the Corps for the first time.

In #76, the Guardians decided to strip Hal of the ring because they believed he had misused it.

Hal was "replaced" by Guy Gardner for the first time in #116. Guy grappled with Hal over being Earth's primary Green Lantern for many issues, until his wish nearly came true in #150.

In #172, the Guardians reversed themselves again, ruling that the Corps and its remaining members were insufficient to the task of protecting an entire galaxy. In a soon-to-be-characteristic speech, Hal again convinced the Guardians that the Corps was needed.

That conviction lasted until #181, when Hal resigned from the Corps, disgusted by the Guardians' manipulative ways. Enter John Stewart, who became the Green Lantern of Sector 2814, Earth's sector, in #182. In #194, the Guardians selected Guy Gardner to succeed Stewart, and, an issue later, Guy battled Hal for the title of Green Lantern of Earth, and won. The Guardians ordered Hal to recruit a new Green Lantern Corps. In #199, Hal returned to active duty as a full-fledged GL.

In #200, the Guardians left this universe along with their cosmic mates, the Zamarons, after which the entire Corps disbanded. A year later, the Guardians returned, and the Corps was rebuilt, with Hal recruiting new members.

The Guardians quit again and formally disbanded the Corps in #224. That paved the way for a third *Green Lantern* series, beginning anew in 1990 with a #1 issue, in which Hal, Guy, and John formed the Corps's core. In #48-#50, Hal Jordan abandoned his ring "once and for all" to absorb all the power in the central battery on Oa, then he disappeared from the known galaxy.

Which brings us to Kyle Rayner...the *newest* new Green Lantern.

—Gary St. Lawrence

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the Drawing board

The showcase of comic book fan art.

All people whose submissions appear this month win copies of *Batman* #500 (Collector's Edition) and *X-O Manowar* #0 signed by Joe Quesada and *New Warriors* #50 signed by Darick Robertson! The three runners-up win all that cool stuff plus a *Prophet* #5 signed by Stephen Platt and an *Armorines* #1 signed by Jim Calafiore! The artist of the best entry this month wins all that cool stuff plus a *Moon Knight* #55 signed by Stephen Platt, an *X-Men* #30 signed by Andy Kubert, and a *Rune* #1 signed by Barry Windsor-Smith! Congratulations to all!

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By Thomas Johnson
Gillette, WY

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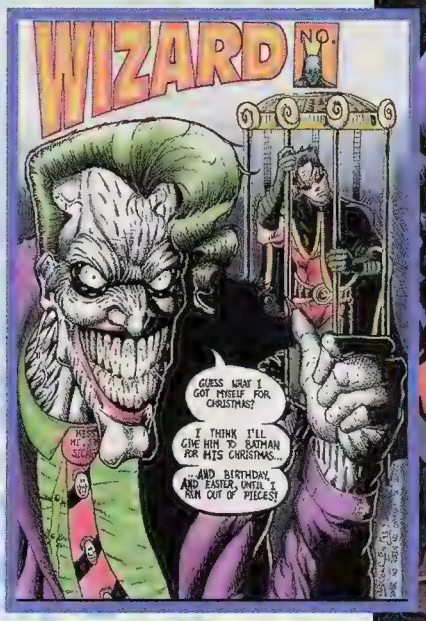
THE JOKER & ROBIN
By Jason Badower
Toorak, Victoria, Australia



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Spawn & the Violator ™ & © Todd McFarlane Productions

RUNNER-UP

SPAWN vs. THE VIOLATOR
By ELF
Charlotte, NC

THE HULK
By R. Anthony Garcia
Lenexa, KS

PRIVATE AMERICAN
By Raymond H. Meenan
Pittsburgh, PA

VOODOO
By Marcus Varner
Azusa, CA

The Hulk ™ & © Marvel Entertainment Group

Voodoo ™ & © Wildstorm Productions DBA Aegis Entertainment

RUNNER-UP

ANGELA
By Jeff Welborn
Shreveport, LA

TRENCHER
By Brad Green
Gahanna, OH

KORILLA
By R. Lee Stalter
Atglen, PA

Angela ™ & © Todd McFarlane Productions

Trencher ™ & © Keith Giffen

Korilla ™ & © Warp Graphics

RUNNER-UP

SUPERHERO NIGHT AT THE SIZZLER
By James H. Gibson
Somerset, KY

ALL CHARACTERS ™ & © THEIR RESPECTIVE COMPANIES

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ROGUE
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SUPERMAN vs. THOR
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DAREDEVIL
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GAMBIT'S GIRLS
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Albuquerque, NM

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Gambit, Rogue & Bella Donna ™ & © Marvel Entertainment Group

Entries for The Drawing Board should be sent to:
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Congers, NY 10920-2064

Submissions can be on any form of unlined paper or posterboard, and can be in any medium (oils, crayon, line art, bloody finger, etc.). Neon inks will not print. Artwork must not be larger than 8" x 11-1/4". Do not fold, bend, or roll artwork. Mail flat to avoid damage. Please enclose your name and full address. All entries are nonreturnable and become property of Wizard Press. Employees of Wizard Press are the sole judges of the contests, and all decisions are final. Good luck!

THE END

IS NEAR...

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The fan with the highest score for the day will receive an autographed bowling ball signed by Joe Quesada, Jimmy Palmiotti, Nelson, and everyone involved in the *Wizard* Bowling Odyssey!

PHOTO: AL ORTEGA

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For a list of winners, available after July 22, 1994, send a stamped, self-addressed envelope to *Wizard* Bowling Odyssey Winners, c/o Wizard Press, 151 Wells Ave., Congers, NY 10920-2064, or just watch future issues of *Wizard*!

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My friend is:

NAME (PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY) _____ AGE _____

HOME ADDRESS _____

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Once again, the magicians here at *Wizard* have conjured up more wildly popular baby pictures of today's top creators. Now you can get a gander at some of comicdom's coolest creators back in the days when all they could do was gum a teething ring and make a load in their diapers. Try to match tot to pro!

J. Schuyler

1.

J. Schuyler

2.

Al Ortega

3.

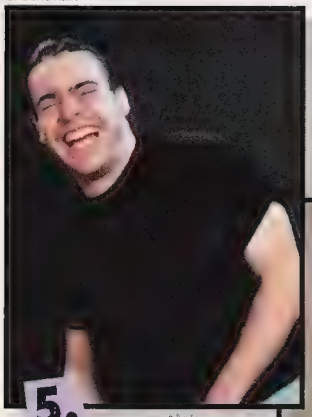
Al Ortega

4.

BIG

1. **Mark Bagley**
2. **John Byrne**
3. **Sean Chen**
4. **Jim Lee**
5. **Nelson**
6. **Joe Quesada**
7. **Bart Sears**
8. **Marc Silvestri**

J. Schuyler



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J. Schuyler

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Al Ortega

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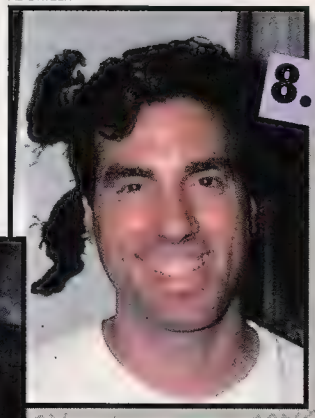
Al Ortega

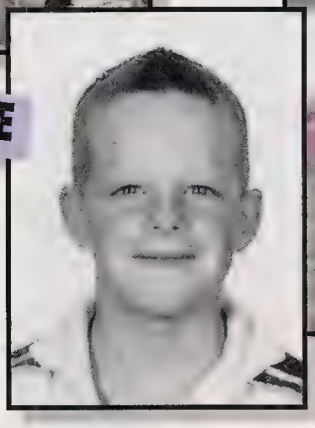


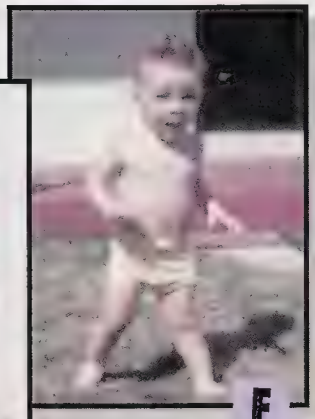
8.

BABIES 3

By Rob Samsel

Another look at the industry's top creators in their innocent years.

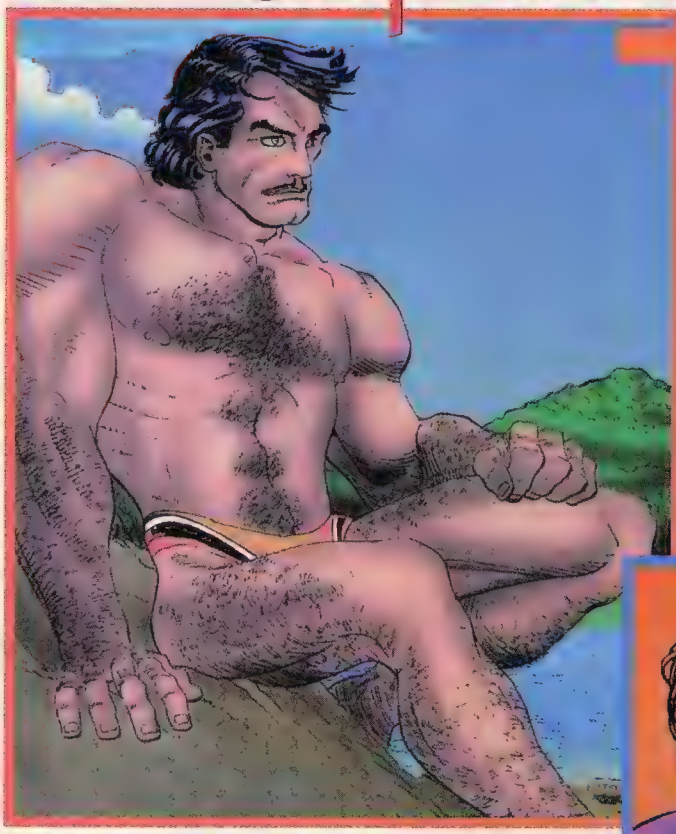




Answers: 1: E, 2: B, 3: G, 4: A, 5: C, 6: F, 7: H, 8: D.

She-Hulk & Wonder Man ™ & © Marvel Entertainment Group

HUNK & BABE of the month



Tony Stark © & ™ Marvel Entertainment Group

Hunk — TONY STARK

"Tony Stark/makes you feel/He's a cool exec/with a heart of steel..." Anybody remember those awful old Marvel cartoons? The short ones that featured the adventures of Namor, Hulk, Thor, Cap, and Iron Man? Putrid stuff. You can bet 10 bucks that Tony here never showed up wearing *this* kind of outfit in that 'toon, though. Geez, he should think about improving his image by waxing his back or something (and maybe using some Nair for his feet. What is this guy, a Hobbit?). Covered in fur or not, Tony here still has more bucks than Nancy Kerrigan has endorsement deals, and when certain females catch wind of a padded bank account, they'll grab a guy and get all they can outta him (and all that hair on his back makes it *real* easy to grab this guy!).

Rapture ™ & © Erik Larsen

Babe — RAPTURE

How does that costume stay up? It's impossible. It's like that story of the kid who kept all the water behind the dike by plugging the leak with his finger. There's no way that bustier can hold back her, ummm...er, you know, her thingies. Anyway, gravity-defying or not, Rapture here (who looks like she got some hairstyling tips from Rogue) is one primo hot comic babe. With that in mind, and the knowledge that her outfits are smaller than a Smurf's PJs, how did she end up as part of a team called Freak Force? I mean, really, where's the fame and distinction in that? "Hi, I'm a charter member of Freak Force. Wanna dance?" Geez, being an ex-Champions or ex-New Defenders member is cooler than that. (All things considered, though, the scenery is a lot nicer in Freak Force.)

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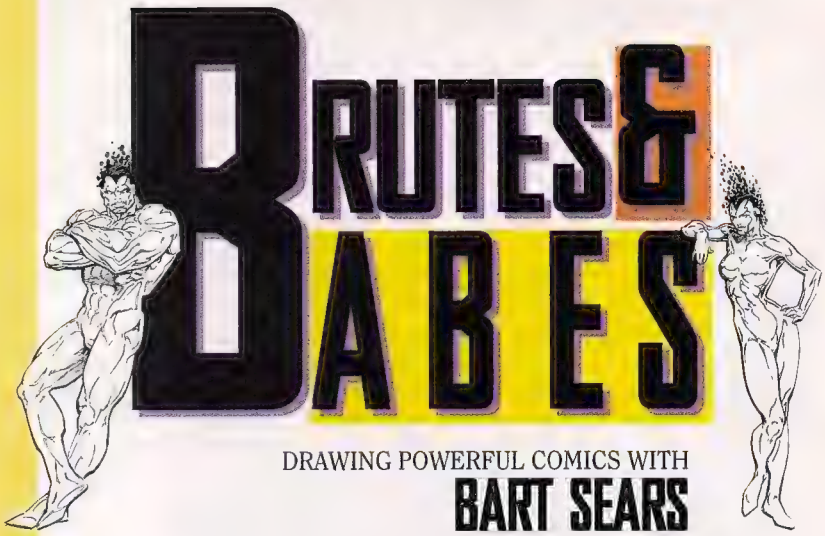
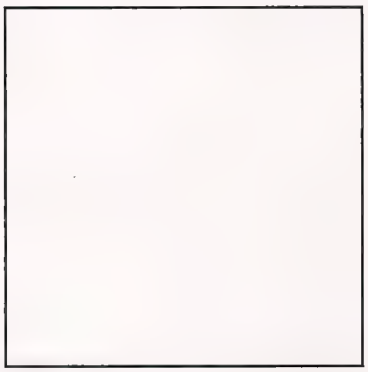
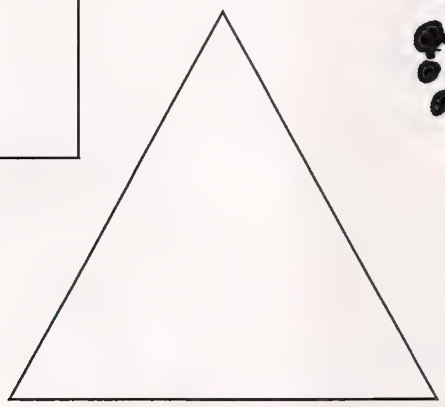
Topps COMICS

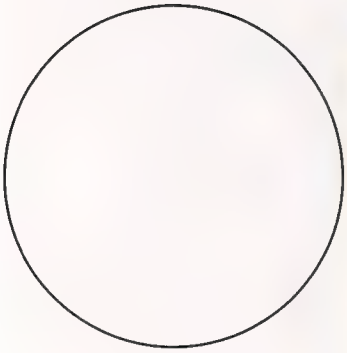
Hyah! Welcome once again to Brutes & Babes. This month, we're going to go back to our roots—back to the heart of any well-drawn comic book. This month, we're going to talk about...

BASIC DRAWING









SECTION I:

Well, here we are. This is probably where we should have started all those many moons ago. Basic drawing: it's definitely the heart of the matter.

When you think about basic drawing, what goes through your head? I know that when I think about basic drawing, I think of simple shapes, forms in space, perspective—all those lovely things you use in every single drawing you do. So that's where we're going to start today.

The first thing we're going to look at are basic shapes: a square, a circle, and a triangle. Everybody out there is capable of drawing these things, but just to make sure, why don't you sit down and do a few? These three basic shapes, or combinations or derivatives of these shapes, are what everything you draw is constructed from—these are the building blocks from which everything else springs. Look at them, learn them, and know them.

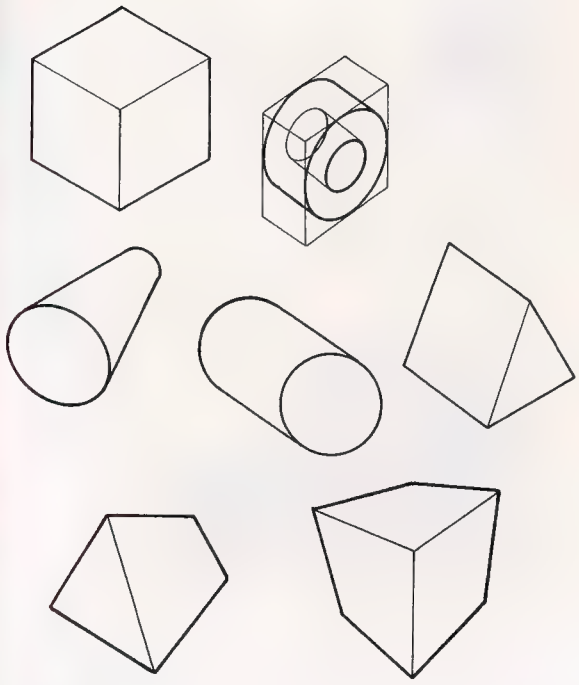
BASIC SHAPES

SECTION 2:

Look at the shapes on the right. See how they seem to take up actual space—how they look like they exist in more than a two-dimensional plane? Even though they're drawings, they look like you can reach right in and pick one up. They have solid mass. This is done by throwing these shapes into perspective. Perspective, according to my friend Webster, is "the art or science of drawing or otherwise representing objects or scenes on a plane so that they appear to have their natural dimensions and spatial relations; the appearance of an object with regard to dimensions and spatial position."

Some of the objects are shown in isometric perspective, "isometric" meaning "equal in measure." Isometric perspective also means that all the lines going in the same direction to the same "vanishing point" are parallel. Isometric perspective is generally used for mechanical or technical drawings in which it is important that forms are not warped by distance and that all the measures are true. The "normal" perspective, as you can see, does warp forms; objects seem to become smaller as they recede into the distance.

Perspective is necessary in comics. It adds life and realism to everything you draw. Study these shapes. See why one is isometric, see why one is normal perspective. Play with them. Heck, pick 'em up if you want.

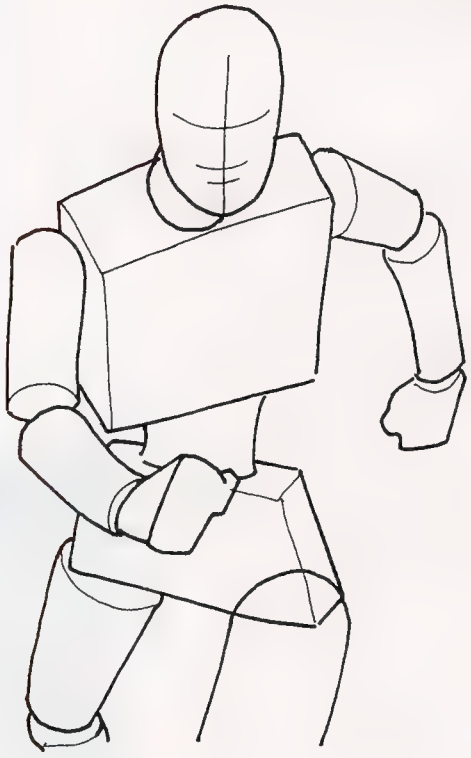


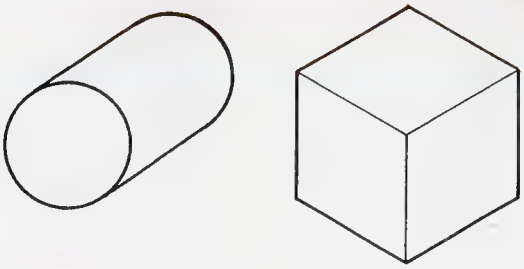
PERSPECTIVE

SECTION 3: ISOMETRICS

Below are two shapes drawn in isometric perspective. They don't recede into the distance; all the measures are the same. All of the construction lines going to the same vanishing points are parallel. The objects have shape and form, but no true pizzazz. Understanding isometric perspective is very important, because it helps you realize that shapes are solid—that the cylinder is an actual solid form in space, that it doesn't taper like a cone, and that both of its ends are equal in size.

The principles of drawing this way are really no different from the principles of normal perspective, except that the vanishing points of these objects are so far away in the distance that the lines appear parallel. Look at the figure drawn in isometric perspective on the right. There are no receding forms on his entire upper torso or arms. The hands are the same size, even though they are four or five feet apart. The figure is well constructed, but somewhat boring. Isometrics, by their very nature, are plain and boring. They show form, and they show relationships between forms, but they don't add any drama or excitement; they're usually kind of blah.

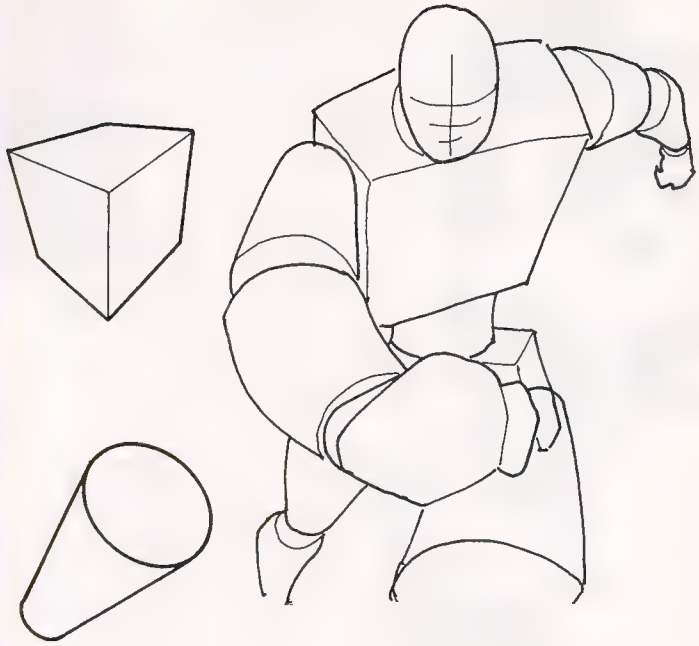


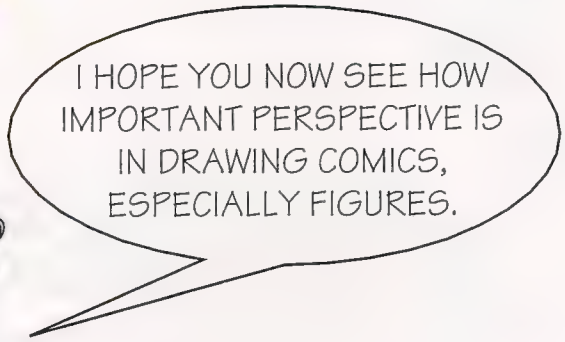


SECTION 4: PERSPECTIVE

Note the two shapes on the right. They're in a much more interesting perspective. Note how, instead of being parallel, the lines that go to the same perspective points start to come together, making the object appear to recede into the distance. These shapes are drawn no better or worse than the isometric shapes in the previous panel. They're just a little more interestingly drawn, and, though not necessarily real or believable, certainly much more dramatic.

Note the figure on the side. It's in the exact same pose as the figure on the previous page, but I've applied the principles of perspective—actually, I should say "normal" perspective—to it. Look how much more dramatic and powerful this figure is, simply because I've placed him in this perspective. The hand in the foreground is about the same size as his head, if not larger, and the hand receding into the distance is teeny tiny, about the size of his nose. It adds a lot more power, a lot more drama, and a lot more excitement to your drawing. This is the importance of perspective. You must have a clear, competent understanding of it, and you must learn how to do it.

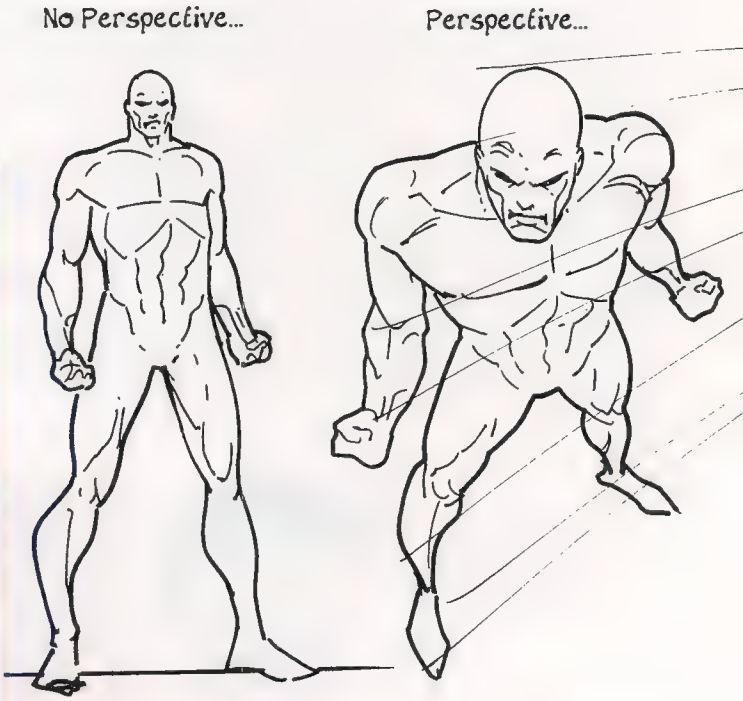




SECTION 5:

Make sure that you don't just swoosh by perspective in your haste to draw figures. Yeah, yeah, I know you won't, but it's important to be reminded of these things so you don't forget.

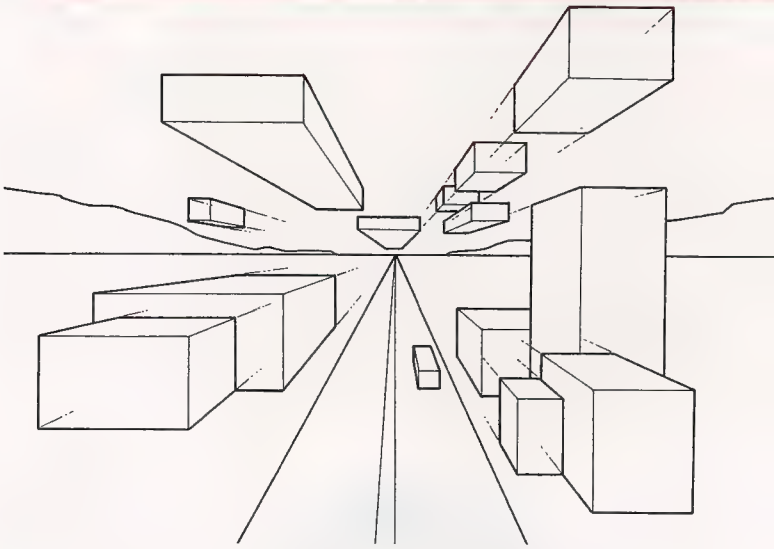
Notice the two figures to the right. The first figure was drawn with no perspective, which is fine; it's a nice, isometric view, and you can clearly see all the details on the figure. It's certainly perfect for character design or figure study, and it certainly has its application in comics. But look at the figure thrown into perspective; see how much more dynamic and dramatic it is. It's the same pose, same everything, only now we're looking at him from a different perspective. It's like looking at the same person from a different camera angle. It takes on a whole different meaning, a whole different drama and excitement. Don't forget, perspective will add mood to your drawing as well. We'll delve into that more in the coming months.



FORMS IN SPACE

SECTION 6

Look at the drawing of the cubes in one-point perspective below. (Ahh, one-point perspective. "What is that?," you say. Yes, we've gone over it before, rather briefly...but stay tuned to the B&B channel. You'll see why.) Just take a look at them. Look...look...look...



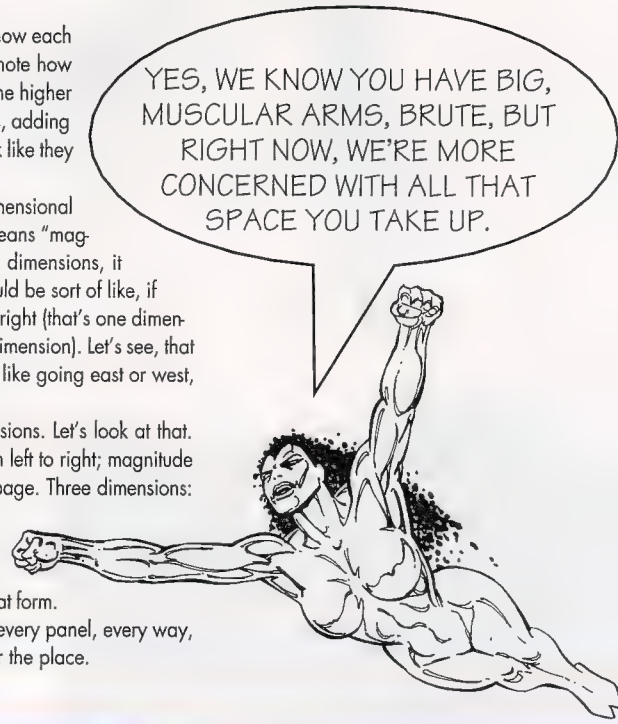
SECTION 7:

Now that you've studied the drawing above, we can talk about it. Note how each form has a particular mass and size; obviously, we can see the shape. But note how each form relates to the others, how some are farther away, some closer, some higher off the ground. Knowledge of perspective helps you draw these kinds of things, adding forms, adding little people, shapes, anything you want, and making them look like they exist in a particular three-dimensional environment.

Three-dimensional environment...hmmm. How does that relate to a two-dimensional environment? Well, "dimension" (it's a noun, I see, according to Webster) means "magnitude in length, breadth, thickness, or time." OK, so if something has two dimensions, it would have magnitude in, say, length in two different directions. So that would be sort of like, if you were looking at a piece of paper, length across the page, or from left to right (that's one dimension), and up and down the page, or from top to bottom (there's the second dimension). Let's see, that would give you a flat surface, and if you went across the page, it would be like going east or west, and if you went up or down the page, it would be like going north or south.

We can assume that three-dimensional would mean having three dimensions. Let's look at that. Something three-dimensional would have magnitude across the page, or from left to right; magnitude up and down, or from top to bottom; and also magnitude in and out of the page. Three dimensions: form in space. Anything drawn with perspective has three dimensions. The little Brute drawing in the top corner has three dimensions, because its form is drawn using rules of drawing and perspective which allow you to think that it has a three-dimensional shape—it creates form, and it takes up space with that form.

Form and space: they're very, very important. They're used in comics in every panel, every way, every day. Take a look and you'll see. You'll start seeing perspective all over the place.



CLOSING:

Well, that's it for this portion of Brutes & Babes. In future Brutes & Babes, I'm going to try to get out as much information as I can in as short a period of time as possible without jumping around from one thing to another, which I've done in the past. In the next few months, we're going to be taking a good look at form and space, and form and space deals a lot with perspective.

Dear Brute & Babe

SECTION 1:

Brendan Robeson from Owings, Md., wants to know what stages are involved in creating a comic book, and what must be done in each stage.

The first stage is writing either a plot or a full script. A plot will contain descriptive detail as to what is going on, where it's going on, and how it happens. A full script is a fully written comic story detailing each panel, each action in each panel, where everybody is in each panel, and also exactly what they say in each panel.

The second stage in creating a comic book is penciling the artwork. The third stage is writing the script, if you're working from a plot, or, if you already have the full script, making any necessary adjustments. The fourth stage is lettering the dialogue.

The fifth stage is inking the artwork. This is necessary because pencil lines don't print well. Therefore, each line must be redrawn in black india ink to make it visible to the camera and to make it print cleanly and clearly. The sixth stage is coloring the artwork. There are several different ways to do this. The last stage in creating a comic: printing it.

If you're talking strictly about drawing a comic book, then the steps go like this. The first step is to do small "roughs," generally called thumbnails, which are undetailed drawings meant to help you get a feel for the design of the characters, where they are, and how they relate to everything else in the panel or on the page. Basically, roughs help you figure out forms in space.

After you've done a thumbnail you like (it's usually best to do several thumbnails and choose the one you like the most), take some full-size paper and rough in all the forms in space of whatever you're drawing. Once you have everything laid out, use your basic forms to build and construct everything on the page: figures, cars, buildings, pipes, guns, or whatever. Use the simple basic shapes that you know and love to give everything form and structure.

The next step is to add whatever details you need to give the drawing life and realism. The final stage is lightly erasing the page and penciling everything with a hard, firm line.

SECTION 2:

C. Seamus Conway from Big Rapids, Mich., writes that's he's interested in more plots. Try this one:

SUPERMAN PLOT

Page One:

PANEL ONE: ECU (extreme close-up) of Superman's eyes, angered, his hair a little wild, falling in his face.

PANEL TWO: Long shot of Superman and Darkseid in a weird, space-type setting, with little spheroids and swirls floating around. Superman's upset, chomping at the bit. He and Darkseid are having words. Darkseid is floating, legs spread, arms folded across his chest, looking invincible.

PANEL THREE: Medium shot of Superman, fist clenched, shouting. He's about ready to snap.

PANEL FOUR: CU (close-up) of Darkseid, smirking, obviously daring Superman to try something, with an I'm-tougher-than-anything kind of look on his face.

PANEL FIVE: Superman moves toward Darkseid quick as lightning, laying into him with a fierce punch that knocks Darkseid for a loop.

Page Two:

PANEL ONE: Darkseid recoils, crumpling, as Superman stands menacingly above him.

PANEL TWO: MCU (medium close-up) of Darkseid, looking up at Superman, P.O.'d.

PANEL THREE: Big panel. Superman and Darkseid grapple, one of Darkseid's hands locked on Superman's fists, one of Superman's hands locked on Darkseid's fist. They struggle, lashing back and forth at one another, neither getting an edge.

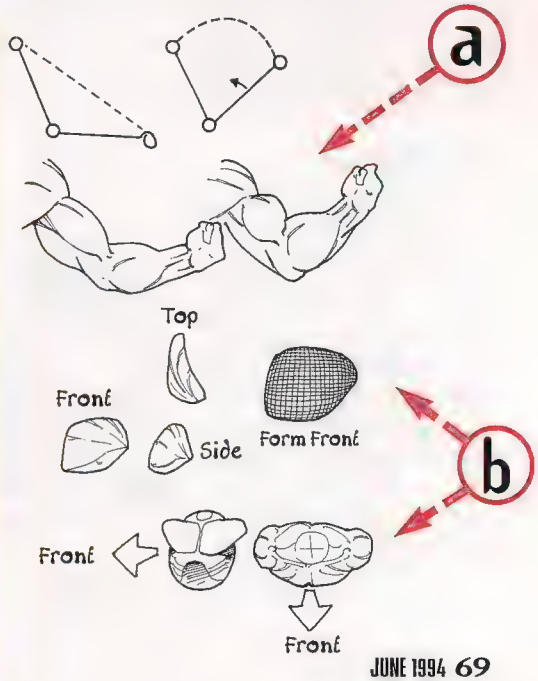
SECTION 3:

Trevor Reese of Georgia says that he's having some problems with muscle movement.

Look at drawing A. The simple joint drawing with the dotted line represents a stretched muscle and a condensed, flexing muscle. Notice how, on the joint diagram, the dotted muscle line swells as the two points move closer together. Note the biceps of the arm—see how they're stretched when the arm is relatively straight, and, when the hand moves closer to the shoulder, how the biceps ball and bulge? Most arm muscles move like this, except for the triceps (the muscles on the back of the arm, beneath the biceps).

Now look at drawing B. You have to view all muscles as shapes. Once you view them as shapes, you can put them in perspective. Look at the shapes I've drawn: the front, side, and top views of one chest muscle. See how the mass has form in all three views? Also, note the rough line drawing of the chest mass, which shows how its form fills space.

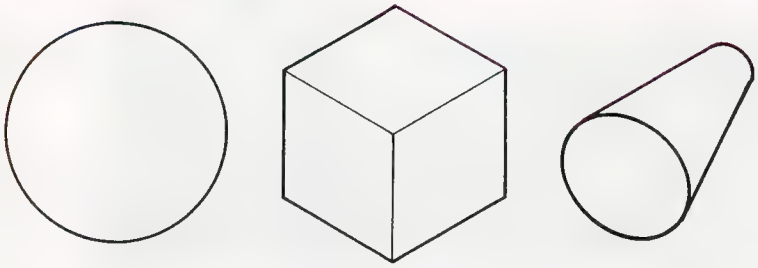
You have to build each muscle from simple basic forms, and add the basic forms of the muscles, or the bubble muscles, if you will, on to the top of these simple forms. But it's important that you learn all views of a muscle, and then you have to learn how to bend and twist that muscle.



Little BRUTES & BABES

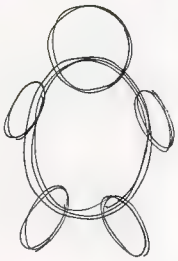
INTRODUCTION:

Last time, we took a look at basic shapes. This time, we're going to look at these basic shapes, which you see to the right, and how they help make figures. We're going to start out with really simple figures, as you can probably see. I hope you've all been practicing, and that you understand blocks and cubes and cylinders, because we're going to be using lots of them. So pick up your pencil, get out that scribble pad, and let's get to it.



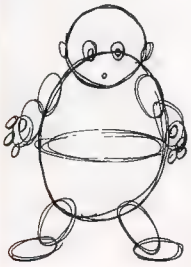
SECTION 2:

For the simple cartoon figure, we're just going to use some simple balls: one for the head, a big one for the body, a couple for the feet and arms, and—well, you'll see, it's pretty simple. Do your best and draw something similar, as close as you can get. Just keep your shapes nice and smooth and clean.



SECTION 3:

In this step, we're using some more simple shapes for the eyes and mouth. Simply cut the big ball in half to get the pants line. Using some simple shapes, add the details you need to give the figure a little more life. For example, use little cylinders for fingers. Keep it clean, keep it simple, keep it silly. See how all this stuff ties together?

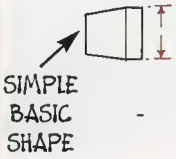


SECTION 4:

Here's the finished little cartoony gut, constructed solely with simple basic shapes; it's real quick, real clean, and real easy. The important thing to do when you're constructing a figure, even one as simple as this, is to keep proportions clear in your mind. Watch the distance between the eyes, remember to make sure the fingers are the same size, the arms are the same length, the legs and feet are the same size and length, et cetera. These are the important things to concentrate on in this stage of drawing.

SECTION 5:

Let's look at simple shapes and how they can make up a more realistic heroic figure. Draw a rectangular box, much like the one to the right. Measure the side—on this drawing, the distance is marked in red—using a ruler or a piece of paper. Draw an imaginary line starting from the top corner of the box that is exactly the same length as the height of the box. Now draw another imaginary line starting from the bottom corner of the box that is four times the height of the box.



SECTION 6:

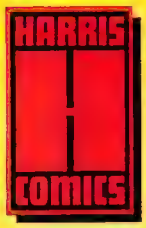
Study the figure at the right and look at the measures. Each cylinder for each section of the arm is as long as the height of the rectangular box in the previous drawing (the red measure). Note how the top of the head meets the top measure, and how the bottom of the neck (that is, the bottom of the cylinder) meets the top of the box, which serves as the basis for the figure's chest. See how the bottom of the smaller rectangular box (that's the hips) touches the distance mark? Notice how the legs were made by stacking one cylinder atop the other, with each cylinder being one-half the distance from the bottom of the hips to the floor. Look at this drawing and study it: it's a simple measuring system.

SECTION 7:

Next we just draw some simple basic shapes over the chunky box form, to "roundize" and "humanize" the figure, to make it less mechanical. It's still not quite a finished comic figure, but it's starting to take shape that way. Look at it, study it, and if you have any questions, well, gee whiz, write in with them.

SECTION 8:

Next in Little Brutes & Babes, we'll delve deeper into these simple shapes and how they relate to figures. Good luck, keep those pencils sharp, and keep drawing!

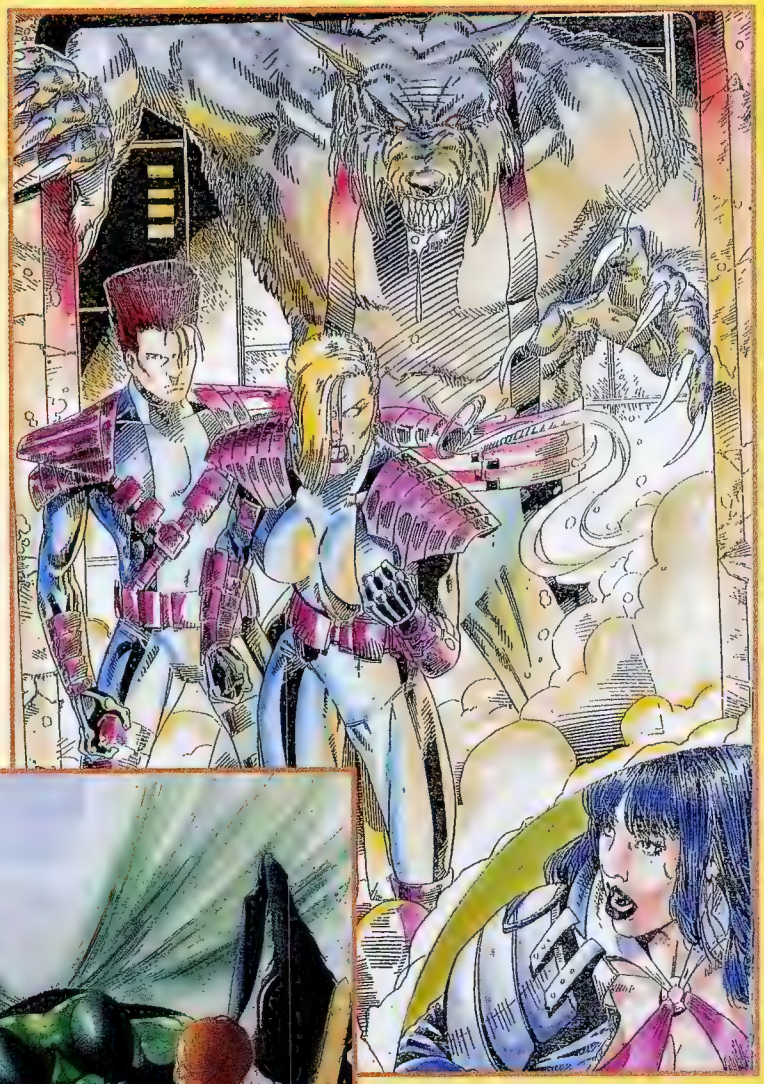


HOT FROM HARRIS IN JULY!

VENGEANCE OF
VAMPIRELLA #4

THE UNDEAD ARE ON THE RUN: CAN VAMPIRELLA STOP THEM?

Tom Sniegoski
Steve Crespo
Joe Weems/Jason Minor
$2.95 US $3.95 CANADA



HARSH REALM #6

THE FINAL SHOWDOWN

HUDNALL
PAQUETTE
RIDGWAY

Painted Cover by Rob Orteleza

COMING SOON!
CAIN BUSTS BACK!
SPECIAL TRADE PAPERBACK TELLS THE WHOLE STORY!

CONTEST Sabretooth

Ever since our good friend Wolverine was de-adamantiumized, he just hasn't been the same berserker fruitcake that we fans have come to treasure so. Heck, he even quit the X-Men! But knowing full well that Wolvie was the most popular X-Man, Professor Xavier acted quickly. (Hey, he didn't wanna lose any readers.) He replaced Wolverine with an even bigger psychopath: Sabretooth.

To help celebrate this event, *Wizard* wants you to have the opportunity to win every single stinkin' Sabretooth comic book appearance (and we mean *every*!).

Win 'em all! Including his super-cool first appearance in *Iron Fist* #14 and his super-lame appearance in *Power Pack* #27!

TEX

Grand Prize (One winner...and that's it)

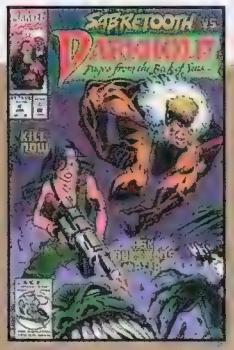
One lucky fanboy or fangirl will win one copy of every regularly released Sabretooth appearance, from his debut in the pages of *Iron Fist* #14 through this May's Marvel comic books! Want a rundown of those issues? All right, here's what you win:

***Amazing Spider-Man* #322, #324; *Battletide* #2-#4; *Classic X-Men* #10; *Daredevil* #238; *Darkhold* #3, #4; *Designer Genes: Spider-Man/Sabretooth/Punisher; Iron Fist* #14; *Marvel Comics Presents* #98, #133-#136; *Marvel Super-Heroes* (vol. 3) #10; *New Mutants* #90, #91; *Peter Parker, The Spectacular Spider-Man* #116, #119; *Power Man and Iron Fist* #66, #78, #84; *Power Pack* #27 (*Power Pack*? What the hell was he doing in *Power Pack*?); *Sabretooth* #1-#4; *Sabretooth Classics* #1-#3; *Thor* #374; *Uncanny X-Men* #212, #213, #219, #221, #222, #243, #310, #311; *Wolverine* #10, #41, #42, #44, #46, #48, #49, #60-#63; *X-Factor* #10, #51-#53; *X-Men* (vol. 2) #6, #7, #28-#30; *X-Men Adventures* #3; and *X-Men Unlimited* #3.**

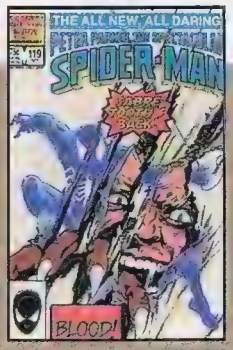
Rules: SO...HOW DO YOU ENTER THIS KICK-BUTT CONTEST? WELL, IT TAKES A LITTLE COUNTING SKILL ON YOUR PART. WHAT YOU GOTTA DO IS FIND OUT HOW MANY PEOPLE (THAT'S HUMAN BEINGS—NO WEIRD DEMONS, MONSTERS, OR ALIENS) SABRETOOTH KILLED IN THE FIVE COMICS DISPLAYED BELOW AND ADD UP THOSE FIVE KILL TOTALS TO COME UP WITH A FINAL GRAND TOTAL, WHICH IS THE BODY COUNT CODE.

THE FIVE BOOKS YOU HAVE TO SNOOP AROUND IN ARE:

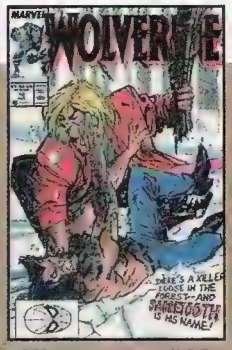
DAREDEVIL #238



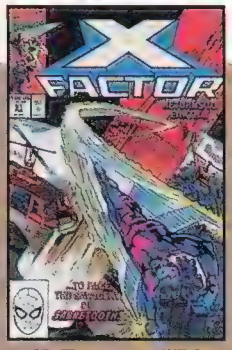
DARKHOLD #4



SPEC. SPIDEY #119



WOLVERINE #10



X-FACTOR #51

AND HEY, ALL WE WANT IS THE GRAND TOTAL OF KILLS. IF SABRETOOTH KILLS SOMEBODY IN ONE OF THE ABOVE ISSUES BUT THAT PERSON CAME BACK TO LIFE IN THE SAME OR LATER ISSUE OF ANY SERIES, WE DON'T CARE. IT STILL COUNTS AS A KILL!!!

The Fine Print

No purchase necessary. Contest is open to anyone except employees of Wizard Press, their immediate families, and the guy who cleans up after Sabretooth goes number two. Print your name, address, city, state, zip code, telephone number with area code, and the Body Count Code on the entry form, a three-by-five-inch index card, or a standard postcard. Enter as many times as you like. Mail each entry to Sabretooth Sweepstakes c/o Wizard Press, 151 Wells Ave., Congers, NY 10920. No mechanical reproductions will be accepted. All entries become the property of Wizard Press and none will be returned. All taxes (federal, state, and local, if any) will be the responsibility of the prize winner. No cash equivalent or substitute prizes are offered. The prizes will be awarded in the name of the contest winner and are not transferable. No special offer books are included in this offer. If the Marvel character Sabretooth has appeared or will appear in any mail-in, redeemable, or specially released book, that (those) book(s) will not be considered part of this contest prize. If any regularly released books published by May 1994 containing Sabretooth appearances which were not included in the list of prizes above are discovered within six months of the winner's receipt of the prizes, that (those) book(s) will be made available to the contest winner. After the six-month period has expired, Wizard Press will not contribute any further prizes to the contest winner. Offer void where prohibited, regulated, or restricted by law in a manner inconsistent with the purpose and rules hereof. **All entries must be received at contest headquarters by June 10, 1994.** Wizard Press is not responsible for lost, late, misdirected, or mutilated entries. Odds of winning will be determined by the number of valid entries received prior to the closing date of the contest. The prize winner will be selected in a random drawing from all properly completed entry forms received at contest headquarters. The random drawing will be conducted on June 13, 1994, by Wizard Press.

For the name of the winner, available after June 30, 1994, send a stamped, self-addressed envelope to Sabretooth Sweepstakes Winner, c/o Wizard Press, 151 Wells Ave., Congers, NY 10920-2064, or just watch future issues of *Wizard*!

ALL CHARACTERS AND IMAGES DEPICTED ™ & © MARVEL ENTERTAINMENT GROUP.

CONTEST Sabretooth

ENTRIES DUE BY JUNE 10, 1994!

YOU'RE JUST ABOUT DONE. WRITE DOWN YOUR MORBID LITTLE BODY COUNT, FILL OUT THIS LITTLE ENTRY FORM, SLICE IT OUT, AND MAIL IT TO:

Sabretooth Sweepstakes
c/o Wizard Press
151 Wells Ave.
Congers, NY 10920-2064

NAME (PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY) _____ AGE _____

HOME ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

PHONE (DON'T FORGET YOUR AREA CODE) _____

Body Count Code: _____

CUT & PRINT

The comic insider's guide to Hollywood.

BY DAVE GALVAN

Eenie, meeny, miney, moe. Which of these characters will get a show? WildC.A.T.s: yes. Spawn: we don't know. Savage Dragon: maybe not, maybe so.

SPAWN IS A REGISTERED TRADEMARK OF TODD MCFARLANE PRODUCTIONS INC.

SPAWN: THE ANIMATED SERIES?

There are rumors circulating that Todd McFarlane and HBO are collaborating on an animated drama series based on McFarlane's *Spawn*. The series would debut on the cable network this fall. McFarlane declined to comment on the rumor, and sources at HBO denied any knowledge of such a production. You can bet that we'll let you know if anything develops.

On a more definite note, Jim Lee's WildC.A.T.s will star in their own animated series come fall, courtesy of CBS. The animation for the series will be handled by Nelvana, which also produces *Cadillacs & Dinosaurs* for CBS. Lee doesn't know what day or time the show will air, but industry sources speculate that the C.A.T.s will air on Saturday mornings, going head to head with Fox's megapopular X-Men cartoon.

It appears that CBS is no longer considering Erik Larsen's *Savage Dragon* for a Saturday morning animated series. Industry insiders believe that the network wanted a team-oriented series to combat Fox's X-Men cartoon, not one with a solo hero like the Dragon; as stated above, CBS evidently opted for *WildC.A.T.s*. However, Dragon fans shouldn't fret: the cartoon may still be optioned as a possible midseason replacement.

There's been a big to-do over the *Youngblood* cartoon, according to a source at creator Rob Liefeld's Extreme Studios. Originally, CBS optioned the series, which will be produced by the newly formed Roustabout Productions in cooperation with Extreme Studios. The source says there was a big falling out between executives at CBS and Liefeld, because network executives wanted to change too many things on the show to keep it in line with their Saturday morning standards. For example, the network wanted guns to be called "blasters," and to reduce the size of the weapons. The network also objected to certain costumes, specifically Riptide's, whose outfit reveals her thighs.

Liefeld withdrew *Youngblood* from consideration at CBS, dismaying executives. Liefeld is currently considering whether to attract another network, release the show in syndication, or, as rumor has it, release the show on video. Extreme should make an announcement within the month, since it wants the series to air in the fall.

SPARTAN & VOODOO ™ & © WILDSTORM PRODUCTIONS DBA AEGIS ENTERTAINMENT INC. SAVAGE DRAGON ™ & © ERIK LARSEN.

FILM

Robin Williams Cast as Riddler

Robin Williams has officially signed on to play the Riddler in *Batman III*, ending months of rumors and speculation over whether the part would go to him, John Malkovich, or Tom Hanks. In an even more interesting turn of events, Warner Bros. is

evidently trying to get Tommy Lee Jones, who won an Oscar for his role in *The Fugitive*, to play Two-Face. There's been no reaction yet from Billy Dee Williams, who played a pre-Two-Face Harvey Dent in the first Batman film. Billy Dee Williams has publicly stated that the only reason he took the role was because Dent would have given him the opportunity to play a villain, something he's always wanted to do.

Two-Face ™ & © DC Comics

"If Tommy Lee Jones plays me, rest assured he won't be bald."

In any case, Robin the Boy Wonder will be appearing in this feature; the studio insisted upon that so it could add the character to the film's merchandising line. Three major "new" characters might pose a difficulty for the film's screenwriter; after all, one of the problems with *Batman Returns* was that its focus was split between too many characters. Joel Schumacher will direct *Batman III*, with Tim Burton executive producing. The film will probably be shot on location in New York City.

According to America On-Line, a nationwide computer bulletin board, the *Street Fighter II* video game will be made into a big budget movie starring Jean-Claude Van Damme as the hero. Producer Ed Pressman (*The Crow*) has hired Steven De Souza to script and direct this $8 million feature. Filming begins in June, and Universal will probably distribute the picture.

The seventh *Star Trek* film, officially titled *Star Trek: Generations*, began filming on March 24. *Generations* will focus on Captain Jean-Luc Picard (Patrick Stewart), who must rescue Captain James T. Kirk (William Shatner) from what sources cited in *Entertainment Weekly* call a "terribly destructive phenomenon that travels through space where past, present, and futures converge." Advance word has Kirk dying in the film's climax, but inside sources are skeptical that Paramount will kill off *Trek*'s most beloved character. It's not known which classic *Trek* actors will join Shatner, but *Next Generation* actors Marina Sirtis (who plays Deanna Troi), Jonathan Frakes (Will Riker), and Whoopi Goldberg (Guinan) have already signed aboard. The magazine said that Rick Berman, the film's producer, is confident that the entire *Next Generation* cast will appear in the film.

New Line Cinema has released more footage from *The Mask*, and it looks incredible. Jim Carrey (*Ace Ventura, Pet Detective*) stars as a down-on-his-luck bank teller who stumbles upon an ancient mask that can let him do just about anything. Carrey was a perfect choice for the role, because he truly resembles a human cartoon. His goofy facial expressions are highlighted by Industrial Light and Magic animation, which makes Carrey look exactly like the Dark Horse comic book character upon which this film is based. *The Mask*, opening July 29, will definitely be a highly anticipated film.

If you're wondering how *The Crow* was completed after its star, Brandon Lee, was killed during filming, muse no more. The filmmakers, after assembling the finished footage, made several script changes. Without eliminating crucial elements of the story, the filmmakers further developed the characters of Sarah, the girl who befriends Lee's character, and Albrecht, the cop who's trying to solve a series of strange murders.

Expect a new *Nightmare on Elm Street* film in theaters this October. Wes Craven wrote and directed this reunion with his creation, Freddy Krueger. Sources at Universal Studios are being coy about the film's plot, and will only say that it will be "wickedly" different from its predecessors. Rumor has it that the story will deal with Freddy hunting the real-life Craven and Freddy portrayer Robert Englund, both of whom gave him "life."

Looks like the Mask just took a gander at Voodoo over on page 74. *The Mask*, with Jim Carrey in the lead, opens July 29.

The Mask © New Line Cinema Corp.

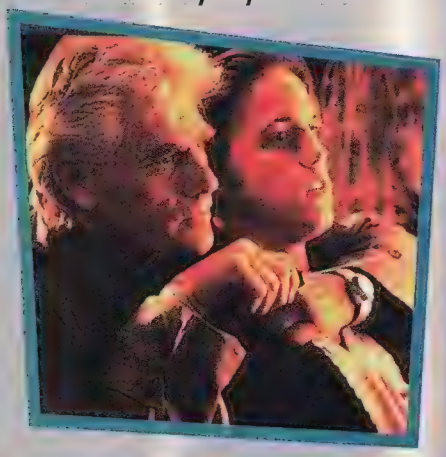
Malibu Comics is bursting with pride over its big screen debut. In the movie *The Chase*, which stars Charlie Sheen as a man being pursued by police, Sheen barely avoids slamming his car into the rear end of a bus. The back of that bus bore one of Malibu's ads, and it exposed well over half a million viewers to the Ultraverse in the

movie's first weekend.

If you haven't caught Peter David's screenwriting debut, *Trancers 4*, don't bother. While Peter is one of the best writers in comic books today, and is certainly the best writer Marvel has, I have mixed feelings about his screenwriting.

I haven't been a big fan of the *Trancers* films. David puts Jack Deth, the main character—portrayed by Tim Thomerson, best known to comic book fans as the actor who played Barry Allen's police officer brother, Jay, in the pilot of the series *The Flash*—out on a limb. To wit, Deth is transported to another dimension where trancers, which are a cross between zombies and vampires, perpetrate a reign in terror. In order to survive, these soulless monsters must suck the life-force from their prey. Deth is forced to help save the land from these horrors.

Jack Deth takes some time out to show some youngsters at the YMCA the manly way to shave.



Trancers 4 ™ & © 1994 Full Moon Entertainment

The film is rated R—for good reasons. There's almost as many four-letter words in this film as in *The Punisher*. In fact, there was so much profanity in this film that I was uncomfortable watching it at times. For a second, I thought I was seeing an episode of *Russell Simmons's Def Trancers Jam*.

Other things which don't play well with me are low production values. I know Full Moon Pictures spent a lot of money—a lot of money for a Full Moon film—on the look of this picture, but the film doesn't show it. The production was shot mostly in Romania, to give it a foreign look; however, the only thing which looks foreign is the castle. The wooded areas look a heck of a lot like the woods where I played as a child.

The acting is subpar, although there are a few exceptions. And the ending is nothing but a segue to *Trancers 5*, also

BOOK REVIEW

Jim Henson: The Works, The Art, The Magic, The Imagination

By Christopher Finch
Random House
$40 (U.S.)/$52 (Canadian)

I cringed at the idea of paying $40 for a book. For that much money, it should come with the original Kermit puppet, I thought.

Would I pay that much again? Heck, yes!

The casual browser can infer the extreme care and attention to detail that was put into this incredible coffee table book just by flipping through it. When you actually sit down to read it, you'll have no doubts that an incredible amount of research went into *Jim Henson*. The first chapter contains a little book within the book—an ashcan, if you will—which tells of Henson's childhood.

"...It's Jack Deth! YEAAHHHHHHHH!!!" Kermit the Frog is speechless after seeing ruthless new *Trancers* flick.

Kermit the Frog ™ & © 1994 Jim Henson Productions

In truth, I passed over most of the early chapters; I was thirsting for the sections about the Muppets. Those sections are lavishly illustrated with color photos. I remember watching *The Muppet Show* as a kid, and today I marvel at the incredible stars who appeared on the show. Liberace, Lena Horne, Edgar Bergen, Sylvester Stallone, Harry Belafonte, Paul Simon, Rudolph Nureyev, Carol Burnett, James Coburn, and Roger Moore all hosted episodes of *The Muppet Show* at some point in its five seasons.

The book goes to great lengths to make sure that the reader understands everything that was Jim Henson's vision, but none of it would have become a reality if it weren't for all the backstage people. The puppetmakers, the operators, the set designers, and so many more people all worked as a team to realize the show.

The book covers all of the Muppet films, and delves into one of my favorite TV shows, *The Storyteller*. It also briefly (and I do mean briefly) discusses the show *Dinosaurs*, which debuted on ABC in April 1991.

I have only two complaints about the book. First, there's barely any mention of Henson Productions's creation of the costumes and all of the visual effects for the three *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles* films. The book also glosses over the failed merger of Jim Henson Productions with Disney.

However, these complaints are mere quibbles considering how much I enjoyed this incredible book, which took me three days to read from beginning to end. It should not be missing from anyone's library. ☆

scripted by David and shot at the same time as this film.

I certainly hope David came away with a lot of new lessons from this project; I'm one of his fans and enjoy his work. There are some rumors in tinseltown about a feature film based on *Sachs & Violens*, the mini-series Peter is doing with George Pérez over at Epic. If this comes about, you know he'd have a hand in the script.

Trancers 4 is not for the whole family. If you go, though, watch for Peter's walk-on cameo as a subject who gets stabbed to death.

Speaking of cameos, it has recently come to my attention that there are a lot of comic book creators appearing in TV and the movies. I know that this isn't a new thing, but some cameos surprised me.

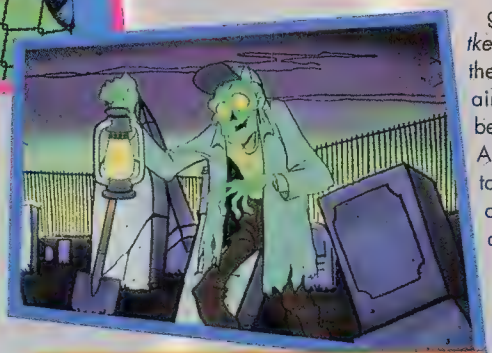
Bob Kane's wife, Elizabeth Kane, had a very small cameo in *Batman Returns* in a brief crowd shot. She was supposed to have had a cameo in the original *Batman*, but the British Equity wouldn't grant her a permit to work in England, where the film was shot. That is common practice: the union has set laws which keep foreign movie companies from flying over and filming movies exclusively with actors from somewhere else. If a scene calls for an extra, then that extra has to be British. There are similar laws here in America. Since *Batman Returns* was shot in Hollywood, Kane was able to have her cameo.

Tom Orzechowski, who's won several awards for his lettering for *Spawn* and *Uncanny X-Men*, literally had a hand in *Brenda Starr*, a movie that was soooo bad it lasted six days in a theater in Alabama. In the opening credits, when we're still in the "real" world, we see a hand lettering in the word "Meanwhile..." on a panel. That, my friends, is Tom Orzechowski's film debut! Tom is pals with Tim Boxell, who works for the company which filmed the opening credits (this is a job that's so small that directors usually contract it to someone else). The company, (COLOSSAL)PICTURES, needed a letterer for the scene, so Boxell asked Orzechowski to do it.

Another interesting cameo was that of Dave Stevens, creator of *The Rocketeer*, in the film *The Rocketeer*. One scene in the film features footage of a Nazi agent testing a German version of the rocket pack in front of several high-ranking leaders, Hitler among them. The prototype explodes upon liftoff. The test pilot: Stevens himself!

SPIDER-MAN ™ & © MARVEL ENTERTAINMENT GROUP

"I can spin a web, any size, catch a th...hey, how the hell can I stick to a chain-link fence?"



No word yet if ABC's *The Cryptkeeper* will return for a second season. (Ever notice how much he looks like Ross Perot and Frank Perdue?)

TALES FROM THE CRYPTKEEPER ™ & © 1994 TALES FROM THE CRYPT HOLDING

TELEVISION

A Trio of Shows

Not much has been released about the new animated Spider-Man series, other than some promotional pictures, the show's name (*The Spectacular Spider-Man*), its network (Fox), and its scheduled debut (in the fall). However, one can make some educated guesses about the characters which will star in the show by looking at the new Spider-Man line of figures being released by Toy Biz later this year. The line includes such characters as Venom, Carnage, Dr. Octopus, Hobgoblin, Kingpin, Lizard, Vulture, Kraven the Hunter, and the Spider-Slayer.

The Tick, which was supposed to debut this May with six episodes on the Fox Saturday morning lineup, has been delayed. Fox's Saturday morning programs recently won the February sweeps, and the network sees no reason to drop a show to accommodate an unknown property. The episodes will probably air either in July or this fall.

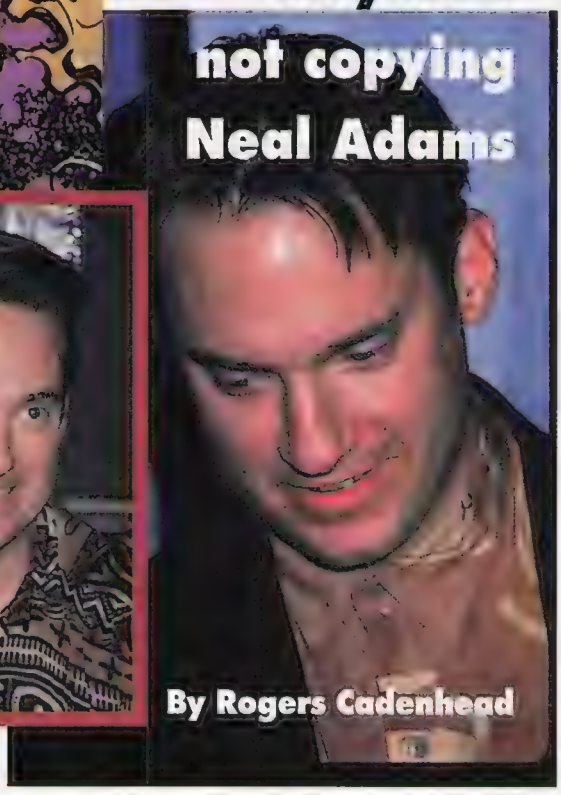
I have a complete episode guide for *Tales from the Cryptkeeper*. Please be warned that these are the episodes' *official* air dates; I know that they've been pre-empted by some of the ABC affiliates. Here in my hometown of Portland, Ore., they all aired a week after the official dates.

#1: "While the Cat's Away," 9/18/93; #2: "Nature," 9/25/93; #3: "Pleasant Screams," 10/2/93; #4: "Gone Fishin'"/"A Little Body Work," 10/9/93; #5: "The Works...in Wax," 10/16/93; #6: "The Sleeping Beauty," 10/23/93; #7: "Cave Man," 10/30/93; #8: "Hyde and Go Shriek," 11/6/93; #9: "Fare Tonight," 11/13/93; #10: "Gorilla's Paw," 11/20/93; #11: "While the Cat's Away," 11/27/93; #12: "This Wraps It Up," 12/4/93; #13: "Grounds for Horror," 12/11/93; #14: "Ghost Ship," 12/18/93. Whew!

Despite what I reported last issue, there hasn't been any positive confirmation that *Cryptkeeper* has been picked up for next season. ☆

S

Artist Norm Breyfogle discusses the art of Prime, his six-year tenure with Batman, and why he's not copying Neal Adams



By Rogers Cadenhead

PHOTOS: AL ORTEGA

PRIME USPECT

"The child is father of the man." As strange as it may seem, William Wordsworth's line is an entirely appropriate introduction to the career of Norm Breyfogle. That's because scenes of childhood—three in particular—have been central to Breyfogle's work.

The first such scene is the murder of Bruce Wayne's parents, the event which set Wayne upon the path to becoming Batman. Breyfogle, a lifelong Batman fan, made a name for himself by supplying art for more than 50 issues of DC's *Batman* and *Detective Comics*.

The second is Kevin Green's metamorphosis from pubescent teen into superpowered man, which is the transformation at the heart of *Prime*. Breyfogle left DC to illustrate *Prime*, the best-selling title in Malibu Comics's Ultraverse line.

The third is from Breyfogle's own childhood. One of his few memories of his father, whom he knew only briefly, is of the Superman drawing which the man made for his son when Norm was two or three years old.

Batman

"It's one of my earliest memories," Breyfogle says. "It was taken from an old *Lois Lane* comic where Superman is splicing these two cables together, and there are sparks flying all around him." The artist, now 34, still has a drawing he made based on his father's illustration, and he wonders how much the cartoon influenced his own desire to draw comics.

"I remember being interested in Superman and Batman before I could read," Breyfogle recalls. His mother didn't just buy him comics; she read them to him as well. "So she encouraged me—it's her fault," he jokes.

It was as a youth, when he devoured DC superhero comics, that Breyfogle came across a comic which showed him the medium's potential. "The first thing that made me decide I wanted to do comics for a living—or think of it as a serious possibility—was when I saw Neal Adams's work on a *Brave and the Bold* story called 'The Angel, the Rock, and the Cowl,' starring Batman and Sgt. Rock. His work just blew me away."

Growing up, Breyfogle was a comics fan, but not part of the official comics fandom. "I grew up in small towns," he says. One of those towns was Aurora, Ill., which is now famous for a pair of public-access cable TV stars named Wayne and Garth. Not only did Breyfogle share a common town with that fictional pair, he shared a common car: "I drove a Pacer, too," Breyfogle confesses.

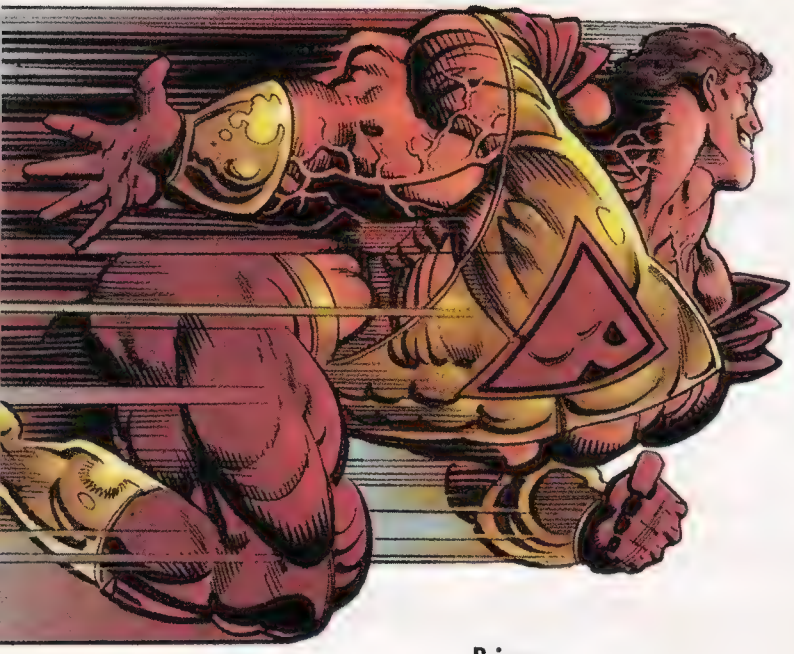
When he was in high school, Breyfogle co-plotted, wrote, and illustrated *Tech-Team* for Michigan Technological University, which printed 10,000 copies of the book. The story was about superheroes who solved "problems which require college-trained minds to solve," to borrow a line of dialogue from the book, and Breyfogle says it was a positive experience.

Breyfogle majored in illustration in college, and is one class away from a degree from Northern Michigan University. The lack of a diploma hasn't seemed to hurt Breyfogle's comics career. "No one at a comic company has ever asked for my résumé," he says.

Unlike many people trying to break into comics, Breyfogle was reasonably confident in his ability to find work when he started sending samples to publishers.

"I was sending out portfolios and getting 'positive rejection letters'—positive feedback, but no work," he says. "I started going to the San Diego Comic Cons, and I started to get some work from [editor] Sal Amendola at DC Comics for its *New Talent Showcase*."

PRIME ™ & © MALIBU COMICS ENTERTAINMENT INC. BATMAN ™ & © DC COMICS.



While Breyfogle was displaying his art in San Diego, and beginning to get discouraged, he formed a professional relationship with agent Mike Friedrich of Star*Reach Productions, a well-known talent agency. This relationship continues to this day.

Friedrich, the president of Star*Reach, says that another one of his clients first brought Breyfogle's art to his attention. "[Writer/artist] Lee Marrs saw Norm's work at the 1985 San Diego Comic Convention art show, and came over to me and said, 'This guy is interesting—you should check it out.'"

Prime

The work he saw was an eight-page Batman story. "This was finished art," Friedrich says. "I could see this guy was a strong storyteller—I thought he was a professional artist. I was real surprised to discover that he had sold [only] one story at that point."

That Batman story was published, but not by DC, and not with Batman. "The funny thing about that story was that DC didn't like the artwork, and didn't like Norm's work," Friedrich says. "[Editor] Al Milgrom over at Marvel had Norm redraw the story as a Captain America story." It was published in *Marvel Fanfare* #29, and it drew yet another negative reaction.

Friedrich explains: "Al [says] that after Norm's story ran, editor-in-chief Jim Shooter said, 'This story was all wrong for Captain America—he acted like Batman.'"

Though agents are not as common in comics as in other fields of publishing, Breyfogle says that his has been beneficial to his career. "Mike is an insider, much more so than I am, who stays in touch with a wide variety of things, because my interests are his interests. He always makes sure I get the best rates on contracts. I know that I would accept a lot less than Mike gets for me."

"Bob Violence," a satirical backup series in Howard Chaykin's *American Flagg!*, published by First Comics, was Breyfogle's first regular job. After that, he had to choose between Warp Graphics's *Unicorn Isle* or First Comics's *Whisper*. He picked the latter, because he saw it as a harder assignment which would involve more research. "*Unicorn Isle* was largely a lot of mythical fantasy, so it would have been easier to make up things," he says.

Part of Breyfogle's self-confidence, then and now, stems from the illustrative style which he's developed. "My style is unique," says the California-based artist. "That was a conscious decision a long time ago."

Though Neal Adams's work was a major influence, Breyfogle was careful when he started to draw not to ape the artist he admired so much. "I decided I was not going to copy his style, even though I was tempted to. I was highly influenced by Adams, but I was influenced by a lot of other people, too. I purposely avoided sitting down and copying a drawing

Norm Breyfogle
PORTFOLIO

line for line; I instinctively knew that would take me in a direction that was less unique."

Breyfogle says that as an artist, it was important for him to develop his own line technique. "I guess that's one of my definitions of integrity as an artist, particularly as a comic book artist. It's more rewarding to me to feel I'm building on a history of my own making."

Before doing comics, Breyfogle worked as a technical illustrator at a nuclear power plant, and for a company designing solid rocket boosters, among other things. He feels that the technical work paid dividends for his art career. "I learned things with technical illustration I didn't expect to learn, such as the way to draw circles in perspective and cylinders in perspective."

It also improved his knowledge of composition. "Drawing isn't just knowledge of structure; that's an important underlying element, but not the most important element. The most important is the intuitional feel for two-dimensional patterns, to see how they work together to form a composition. Drawing is really a two-dimensional thing. You can do abstract drawings which have nothing to do with physical form or that show an understanding of material structure."

His fine arts background has helped in other ways. "I learned from life drawing, and I had a wide range of experience, including painting, working from live models, doing landscapes, all kinds of stuff," he says.

"I never made a big distinction between commercial art and fine art," Breyfogle continues. "Luckily, I'm in a field where, operationally anyway, there isn't much difference. If you're creating your own characters, it's very much like fine art. Comics are one of the most fine-art versions of commercial art: they stand on their own merits; they aren't there to sell something else. They are selling themselves, just as fine art is supposed to."

Admirers say that one of the central elements in Breyfogle's work is its fluidity, a quality that the artist says he has tried to cultivate. "The look of my work—the combination of [reality] and cartoon—is a result of a nearly infinite series of small, deliberate decisions, all based on working quickly and, at the same time, satisfying my aesthetic sense," Breyfogle explains. "I do have a real interest in realism, but I've never been enamored of super-realism or photorealism. It's fascinating to look at, but not something I'd want to do. It seems like a waste of time; why not just use a photograph?" he asks.

To illustrate his point, Breyfogle says, "Among a lot of the great masters, I've always appreciated their sketches more than their finished work. Rembrandt is a perfect example: his final paintings are beautiful and finely controlled, but I like his sketches better, because they look more spontaneous, and they look like he was having more fun. I like a more spontaneous look, as long as the quality doesn't suffer," he says.

"The result is a technique that allows me to be pretty fast and incorporate a lot of different elements at the same time. It has a realistic feel to it, because my structural understanding is very realistic, [even though] my rendering techniques are simplified to the point where they do border on the cartoony. My work seems to improve the faster I work; if I take a lot of time, I tend to overwork it, to second-guess myself. Things seem to work better when I pretend that I'm sketching, and I don't concern myself with purposely forcing myself into a specific direction, and only concern myself with the general qualities of pattern and storytelling."

Each book he has done has been different, which Breyfogle feels has been good for his work. "*Whisper* was the first monthly book that I did, and it was very much a realistic female ninja. 'Bob Violence' was just the opposite, a Road Runner cartoon."

The contrast between the grittier Batman tales and the more world-shattering nature of *Prime* pleases him. "Before *Prime*, I hadn't gotten the chance to do these extremely Marvelized bombastic fight scenes," he says. "Batman does fisticuffs, mostly, but Prime is like the Hulk in a lot of ways."

After working on Batman stories for DC for six years, Breyfogle was ready to explore other avenues. "I was starting to feel the need to do something different. I'd been [with] Batman for a while, and I wanted to try writing my own stuff, although I had stage fright about that. I let my agent know what I wanted, and he found a couple of offers," he says.

One of those offers came from Malibu, which sought Breyfogle for *Prime*. But DC wouldn't agree to publish Breyfogle's personal project, *Metaphysique*, without seeing it first, he says, while Malibu was willing to make a commitment. "Norm is obviously a major talent in the industry," Malibu Creative Director Tom Mason explains.

1. An unpublished "Conanesque" painting from 1982.
2. The cover for *Metaphysique #2*, published by Eclipse Comics.
3. An unpublished baseball painting.
4. Cover of NOW Comics's *Mr. T & the T-Force #5*.
5. Tech-Team, which Breyfogle created at age 17.
6. A panel from a "Bob Violence" back-up story in *American Flagg*.
7. An excerpt from a Captain America story in *Marvel Fanfare #29*.
8. A Penguin sketch.

Metaphysique ™ & © Norm Breyfogle. Eclipse Comics logo ™ Eclipse! Books. *Tech-Team* created by Norm Breyfogle, © 1978 Michigan Technological University. *Bob Violence* ™ & © First Comics Inc. and Howard Chaykin Inc. Captain America ™ & © Marvel Comics. Penguin ™ & © DC Comics.

Once Malibu agreed to incorporate his *Metaphysique* book into its creator-owned Bravura line, Breyfogle says, "I couldn't turn that down." However, the artist admits, he didn't foresee the good times that were ahead for the Dark Knight. "Batman started getting hot at the time I left. I didn't realize how big this Azrael thing would be," he allows. "It would have increased my motivation for staying with DC."

Breyfogle has agreed to paint three covers for DC's *Legends of the Dark Knight*, and was offered story assignments by his former employer, but he doesn't regret the move to Malibu. The Ultraverse has been a success, he argues. "Considering the large glut of new universes, it has done surprisingly well."

One advantage of working with Malibu, he says, is that it's a smaller company, with a less-entrenched idea of how comics should be produced. "I did one double-page spread in *Shadow of the Bat*, and then was told where the ads were supposed to be. [DC had] changed the ad structure, and ended up cutting the spread in half."

Malibu, in addition to being more flexible, has also promoted *Prime* energetically. "Newer companies are generally staffed by younger people, and younger people take more of an enthusiastic participation," he says. "*Prime* is going to be a video game, and the Ultraverse has been optioned for animated cartoons. I think *Prime* would be excellent in any medium. The main star is a 13-year-old boy who can become the ultimate idealized superhero."

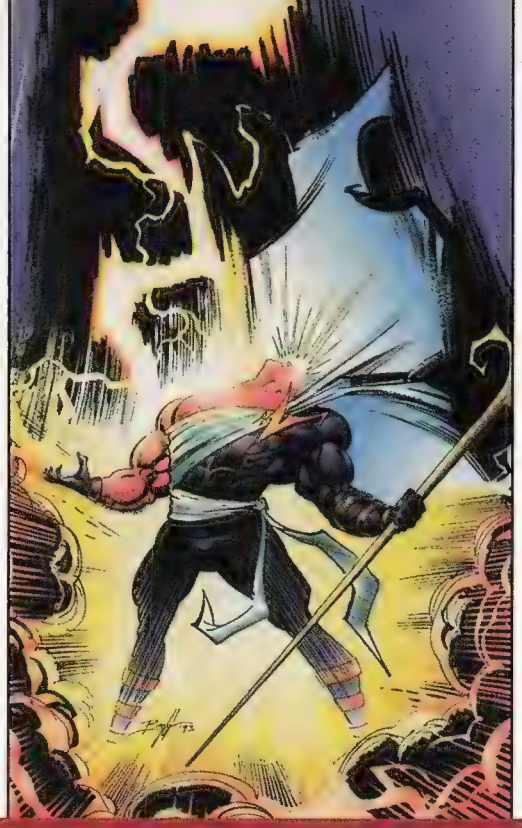
Prime is developing into one of the flagship characters of the young Ultraverse, thanks in part to Breyfogle's work. But Breyfogle credits Malibu for its efforts with the book. "They're one of the best—possibly the very best—publishers at marketing their stuff these days. I don't think there's much argument about that, what with the TV commercials and the total advertising campaign, not to mention animation and video games. That puts them at the top in marketing. It's one of the reasons I'm real happy to be with them right now."

After seeing what morphing technology allowed movie and TV producers to accomplish in *Terminator 2* and *Star Trek: The Next Generation*, Breyfogle would love to see what could be done with Prime's metamorphosis. "I think Prime would be an excellent picture for that," he says.

Len Strazewski, who writes *Prime* with Gerard Jones, says that after he, Jones, and Malibu Interactive President Bob Jacob came up with the concept for the series, Breyfogle was at the top of the list of prospective illustrators. "Norm got involved as our first-choice artist," the writer says. "Norm is a tremendous artist with a great sensibility...I always liked his work," Strazewski says. "Though at the time, I didn't know how well he would take to Prime."

Though he's definitely a big fan now, Breyfogle was not enamored of Prime when he was introduced to the character. "I got a three-page character overview of Prime in the mail, and a synopsis of the plan for the first 12 issues," he says. "It seemed it might be a run-of-the-mill character, which I think was a lot of people's initial impression."

The artist was able to bring his own ideas to the character's concept and costume, which was originally designed by Bret Blevins. "I changed the costume fairly substantially, adding the gauntlets and the gloves, and changing the chest symbol. I made him extremely overbuffed as well. Before that, he was just drawn like Superman; I made him like the Hulk in a superhero costume...and he's getting bigger all the time."



Breyfogle hopes that his work on the upcoming *Metaphysique* (top) will surpass his work on *Batman: Birth of the Demon* (above and right).

Strazewski says he knew "absolutely" that Breyfogle was right for the series when he saw the artist's redesign of Prime. "One of our original notions was that the Prime body is motivated in part by the subconscious of Kevin Green. Early on, we mentioned that to Norm, and he was very enthusiastic." Among the forms that Prime has taken or will take in future issues are Dark Prime, Rogue Prime, and Space Prime. Strazewski also says that there's one more version, Neoclassic Prime, waiting in the wings, although he wouldn't elaborate.

One of the things Breyfogle enjoys most about Prime is the opportunity to oversee the character's growth. "I've added 100 or 200 pounds in muscle and a lot of veins," he says. "Prime is the ultimate superhero—I don't know why he hasn't been featured in Hunk & Babe," the *Wizard* department in which as much superhero as possible is crammed into as little cloth-

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ing as possible. "I keep looking for it."

Unlike his work on Batman, for which Breyfogle often dealt with DC's editors more than he did with the writers, he collaborates with Strazewski and Jones on the character's direction. "I've been feeding ideas throughout the first 12 issues, because it's very open-ended," he says. "I speak to Len and Gerry fairly regularly." Breyfogle says he's happy with the way that *Prime* has developed over the last year.

Over that year, the comic book has had humorous moments as well as dramatic ones. "From his Batman work, I pictured Norm as very serious and very focused," Strazewski says. "I've found him to just enjoy the stuff of comics, and have all sorts of fun with the work." The cover of *Prime* #6, on which Breyfogle depicted the superhero expanding in the vacuum of space like an overcooked hot dog, shows the artist's lighter side.

Another aspect of the book that has intrigued Breyfogle is the interplay between Kevin Green and his Prime form. "It's like Prime has a sidekick," he says. "One of the problems with Batman when he went solo was that he was talking to himself. Prime's Robin is Kevin Green." The child-in-an-adult's-body concept of Prime, which makes him a descendant of sorts of DC's Captain Marvel, has great potential for storylines, he says.

It also has great potential for comedy. Breyfogle compares *Prime*'s concept to body-switch stories like the film *Big*. "In a way, I saw [the comic's premise] as a humor concept... In film, it has always been treated as a humor concept," he says. "Adults expect you to act like an adult, but you act like a child. This story has particular relevance among the adolescent readership of comics, which, like Kevin Green, is at an age [when people are] caught between the two extremes of child- and adulthood."

Breyfogle will leave *Prime* after issue #12, though he has also done a *Prime* annual and *Prime* #1/2. "I'm promising to come back at some undesignated time," he says. George Pérez will pencil at least three issues of the title after Breyfogle leaves.

Malibu hopes he'll continue to work on the character. "One of the reasons *Prime* has been so successful is Norm's dynamic artwork," Mason says. "Sometimes you pick an artist for a project and it comes in even better than you anticipated."

Breyfogle is leaving *Prime* to devote his full attention to the aforementioned *Metaphysique*, a six-issue mini-series that he will write and illustrate for Malibu's creator-owned Bravura line.

Metaphysique was the title of a two-issue anthology, published in 1992 by Eclipse Comics, which collected work that Breyfogle did in college. "In the first *Metaphysique*, there were no superheroes, no skintight costumes, and no violence." The second book, the creator quips, "is just the opposite." All the two

Breyfogle stepped into the spotlight when he began penciling Batman.

Metaphysiques share are a title character and a philosophy, which Breyfogle describes as Eastern and "Zenlike."

"The theme is a coming-of-age story. It is about a young man who discovers he is psychic and learns to project his astral form," he says. Other psychically empowered people figure into the storyline. "It takes off into all kinds of different directions," he says.

The series's main character is Orville Dreugh, a mind researcher who in the 1960s utilized womb tanks and meditational technology. The villain of the story is ideologically opposed to Dreugh and envious of his professional stature. "It is his sabotage of an experiment which results in the birth of Metaphysique," Breyfogle says.

"The villain is the protagonist, actually, if you define it as the person who drives the story forward," he says. "That's why actors like to do villains—they tend to drive the story."

Visually, *Metaphysique* will be a challenge for Breyfogle, because of the main character's ability to assume different forms, including one which the artist describes as a "Primelike priest."

Breyfogle will do everything except letter and color *Metaphysique*, which he calls the most ambitious project he's ever tackled. Though it will be his first major work as a writer, Breyfogle is setting his sights high for the book. "*Batman: Birth of the Demon* was my proudest work to date," he says of the 1992 graphic novel he did for DC. "When I'm done, I think *Metaphysique* will be my proudest work."

The series is scheduled to appear in early 1995, according to Mason. Breyfogle, who has plotted the six-issue series, expects to spend about eight weeks fully developing the storyline.

Ten years after he sold his first story, Breyfogle says he's having more fun than ever. "One of the challenges is to keep the enthusiasm," he says. "I'm progressing all the time, and the faster I get and the more adept I get at what I do, the more enthusiastic I become. If I do hit a plateau, I don't know what I would do. Actually, I was starting to feel like that on Batman.

"I'm still very enthusiastic about *Prime*," he says. "Ideally, I would do it for a couple of years...I want to keep challenging myself." ☆

Rogers Cadenhead is a freelance writer based in Texas. Patrick Daniel O'Neill contributed to this article.

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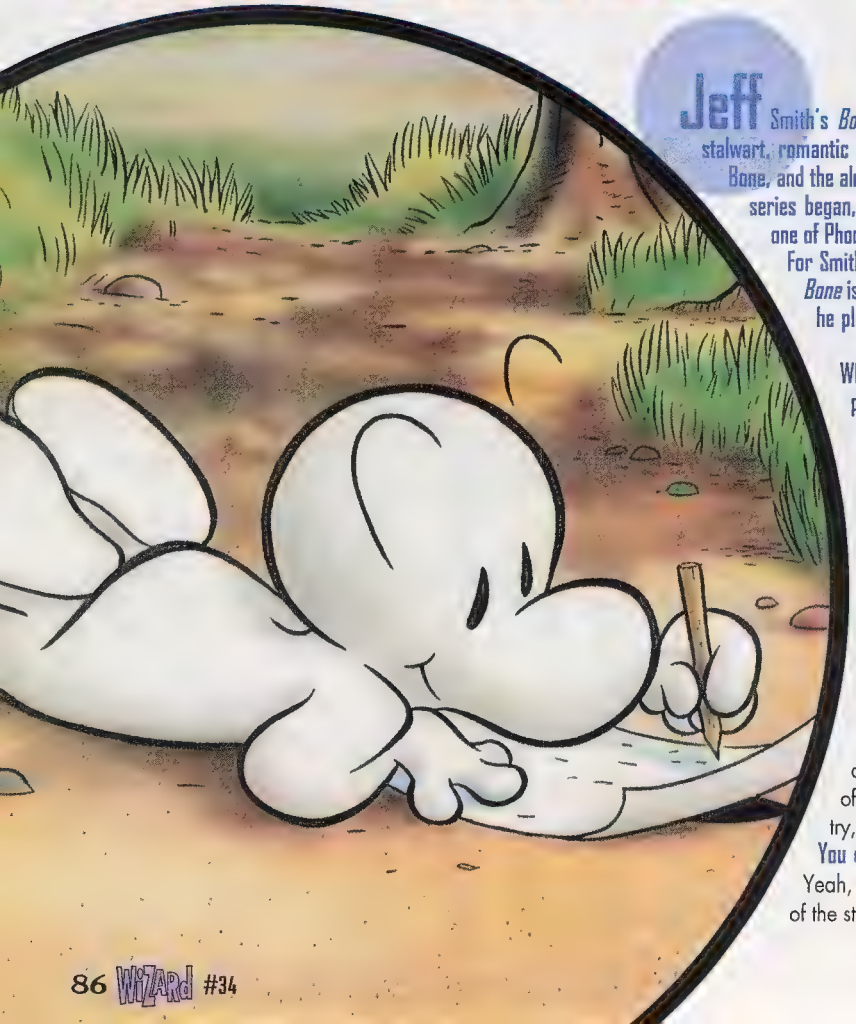
BONE-A-FIDE SUCCESS

JEFF SMITH ON THE FUTURE OF *BONE*, HOW ANIMATION DIFFERS FROM COMIC STORYTELLING, AND THE MYSTERIOUS OTHER BONE CHARACTER.

By Paul J. Grant



Jeff Smith's *Bone* is primarily the story of three cousins: the stalwart, romantic Fone Bone, the greedy and manipulative Phoney Bone, and the almost psychotically cheerful Smiley Bone. When the series began, all three had been exiled from Boneville after one of Phoney's more reprehensible schemes was uncovered. For Smith, an Ohio native who now resides in California, *Bone* isn't just another project: it's a full-time job which he plans on holding for several years to come.

WIZARD: What were you doing before you started publishing *Bone*?

JEFF SMITH: In 1986, I co-founded an animation studio in Columbus, Ohio, called Character Builders. We did primarily TV commercials for the first couple of years, until we started working on feature films such as *Ferngully: The Last Rain Forest*, *Rover Dangerfield*, and *Bebe's Kids*. And the whole time, I had a desire to do my own characters.

I always liked the print type of cartooning. I had done a comic strip based on the *Bone* characters while I was in college [at Ohio State University]. I had done a daily strip for years, and I had that desire to get back and do that kind of work. When I discovered the comic book industry, I looked into that.

You did *Bone* as a daily comic strip for four years?

Yeah, the story I'm telling now is a reworked version of the story I told in college.

Bone and all artwork shown ™ & © Jeff Smith.

Really? Does anyone have any intention of reprinting the original story?
I don't. [*Laughs*]

Do you hold the copyright?
Oh yeah. I did a paperback [in which] I self-published a compilation of the first year of the strip, back in '83, and I sold them. I walked around to all the bookstores and said, "Would you carry this?," and I sold a couple thousand that way.

Are any left?
Yeah, I have a few left... Quite a few people ask me for them all the time, but since I don't want to give away the story, I'm keeping it under wraps. It's been substantially rewritten. I wrote it as I went along in college... Now, since I know what the story is, I can go back and tell the story correctly from the beginning.

Did the strip start out like the series?
It started even more abruptly than the comic book series. It started when Fone Bone stepped into a glade in a clearing and met Thorn. From there, we had to learn the back story. When I started up the comic book, I decided that was way too [far into] the story to start, so I was able to back up a few steps, and start the comic with them in the desert, [just after they'd been] run out of Boneville, so that the readers could discover the Valley with the Bone characters.

The way I did it in college was...well, it just wasn't very thought out, and it was very difficult to understand the premise. The jokes and the humor all pretty much worked. The characters were the same as they are now, but the premise was real nebulous. Now there is a premise: that they were run out of Boneville, and that the Valley is new, unexplored territory that not only are the Bones exploring, but the readers are also.

I guess the cliché question is where did you come up with the idea of the Bones as they exist today?
When I was very young, like in kindergarten, I used to love comics. I used to love to have my parents read me the Sunday comics. I used to love to watch cartoons on TV: *Bugs Bunny, Tom and Jerry, Mighty Mouse*. I just started making up my own characters. And a lot of the kids I used to play with at that age did too, you know. They were making up dog characters and worms or whatever, and I was just drawing Bones.

I drew them a lot, starting when I was 4 or 5, and kept up with them until I got into school, where you outgrow that kind of thing.

What kind of Bone stories did you draw as a child?
When I first drew the Bones, I drew them in Boneville. I made up little comic books set in Boneville, very much like Toontown or something like that.

When I got into college, where I wanted to draw a daily strip, I resurrected these characters, and started creating this world around them. That's when I decided to make them leave Boneville, their little cartoon reality.

I wanted the world that I was creating to encompass all the things that I really liked to draw, which were three-fingered, big-footed-type characters like Mickey Mouse and Pogo; pretty girls; and heavy metal-type stuff—you know, dragons. So that's what you have. That's the world of *Bone* that I came up with.

And then there are the "stupid, stupid rat creatures," which to me have never looked like rats at all.
Yeah. In fact, I printed a letter in *Bone* #9 from a guy because he mentioned that, and the way that he mentioned it made me laugh. He said, "the rat creatures—whose resemblance to rats, for some reason, stops at the neck..."

When I originally created the rat creatures, they had tails, so they were much more ratlike than they are even now. But their tails...I just kind of forgot about them, so now they're big, shaggy, bear-type monsters, and they just retained their name.

Are we going to see any other Bones besides the three cousins later in the series?
I don't know if we'll ever actually see any of them. I remember one other I used to draw a lot as a kid was Flying Bone, who was a pilot, I guess; I don't remember. But I don't think so. I think that once the three Bones that we know in this story leave the Valley, that will be the end of the series.

How far in advance do you have the series plotted?
I have a very broad, general outline which

Thorn and Fone Bone on the run from the rat creatures.

goes all the way to the end of the story, and the way I see it now, it could take years to tell the story of the Bones in the Valley trying to get back to Boneville.

In fact, I have the last three issues of the story already written on paper. So I know what's going to happen, and I know a lot of the landmarks, a lot of the stories I want to go through before we get to the end. But the outline's very wide open. I mean, if things come up that I want to talk about, or [there are] joke developments, I can go pretty far afield from my outline, as long as I remember there are certain "bus stops" I have to get back to, to make sure I take the same route to my destination.

I heard Neil Gaiman describe writing as, "OK, I know I'm in California, and I'm going to New York, and I know that I'm going to stop in Chicago on the way. But in between there, I don't know what I'm going to be doing." And that's exactly what I have with *Bone*. I know the destination, and I know some of the big stops.

Neil is very good at meandering.

[*Laughs*] Neil may be very good at meandering, but as far as meandering goes, he may have met his match! I believe I can wander aimlessly with the best of them.

What's going to happen in future issues of *Bone*? I had heard there's a Moby Dick story...?

There's going to be a very short Moby Dick story. At the end of #12, Thorn has another dream, where she sort of relives her childhood in an ominous way...the Hooded One appears in her dream. In #13, Fone Bone has the first dream he's had since he's been in the Valley; the dream is [a warped retelling of] *Moby Dick*. It's a six-page dream.

In #12, the Hooded One in the dream was revealed to be Fone Bone. What's that all about?

Well, we don't know if he's actually a Bone—well, of course *I* know [*laughs*]—or if he just appeared as one. It was just a dream, after all. But we will find out. The next storyline—without giving too much away—has Phoney Bone come up with some moneymaking scheme, but at the end of that story, all of the mysteries will be revealed, with the exception of the identity of the Hooded One. You'll know all about Thorn's past, and why the Hooded One is after Phoney.

So is *Bone* going to take 300 issues, like *Cerebus*?

Dave Sim's *Cerebus* is so ambitious. My project is not of that scale. Dave's already gone 15 years, and it's going to be another 15 years. I imagine the longest it will take me to tell the story will be 10 years, which is still a fairly large-scale story, and a very big project—but not compared to *Cerebus*.

Can readers expect to see Cerebus "drop by" in *Bone*?

Not in the context of the book, no. The storyline is very self-contained, although I may do some kind of crossover outside of the comic. With Dave Sim—I assume we're still gonna do this—we'll do a two-page story together in a benefit book with Cerebus and the Bones. It would be totally outside the context of both my book and his.

You're on a bimonthly schedule now, so at 10 years, we're talking about 60 issues, more or less.

That could be, but the outline is broad enough that it could go 100, 150 issues.

Well, then, you're going to have to pick up your pace, aren't you?

Well, we'll see. I'll just have to play it by ear. It depends on how much fun I'm having, how the ideas are going, what the acceptance from the audience is.

The very first deviation from the outline has already happened. I had no intention of doing [*Bone* #10's] Cow Race. Originally, I had this Gran'ma Ben character who races cows, who was just tossed in as this crazy old lady. She's an important part of the plot, but the fact that her hobby is racing cows was just a *Far Side* joke I threw in to get a quick laugh and say she's crazy, and that people do weird things in the Valley.

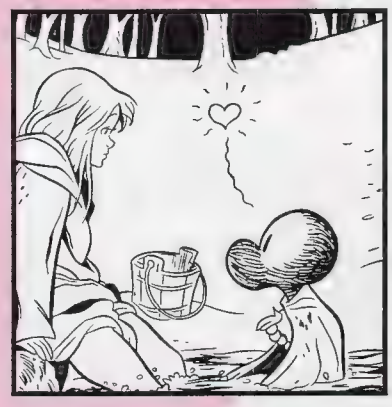
But the storyline kept leading me towards this Cow Race. I couldn't escape it. I didn't have any other plot device. I had all the Bone characters separated, and all of a sudden the Cow Race was the only means I had of getting all the characters back together. Also, there was a bigger reaction from readers about this lady who raced cows than I expected, so it kind of pushed me in that direction. Suddenly, I'm drawing this gigantic Cow Race, with all these cows. It's ridiculous.

The swindling Phoney Bone.

The Great Red Dragon.

At left, a panel from Jeff Smith's college strip showing the meeting of Gran'Ma and Phoney Bone. On the right, Smith's version of the scene from the current series. The characters are much more animated in the newer version. (If you look closely, you can find Ted the Bug on the branch in both panels.)

Love at first sight: Fone Bone and Thorn meet for the first time. The original version is shown above, the revised one at right. Smith manages to add emotion and excitement just through Fone's facial expressions.



Did you ever feel tempted to portray the Cow Race the way they did in the musical *My Fair Lady*, in which they staged the Ascot horse race without ever showing the slightest bit of horseflesh—manifesting its events through the reactions of the spectators who are watching it? You could have done it that way.

That's a really good idea, and I do use that technique. In fact, in *Bone* #3, when Fone Bone meets Gran'ma Ben and her cow for the very first time, I wrote it so you would see Gran'ma Ben and her cow come charging over the hill towards the house. And Gran'ma Ben has met up with one of the other Bone cousins, Phoney Bone, and she's stuck him up on the cow, and we were going to see poor Phoney clinging for dear life to this cow.

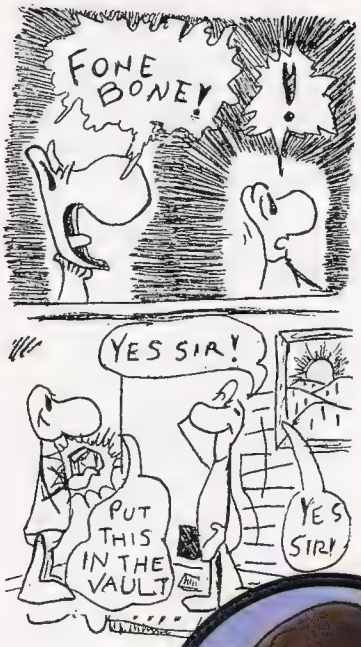
But then I realized, when I got down to laying it out, I could never draw this cow running full speed with this guy hanging onto her back as funny as people could picture it, so I just drew the whole thing from the point of view of Fone Bone and Thorn, like you just said. We just see Fone Bone and Thorn being stunned. The idea of doing something offstage, because the reader can picture it funnier than I can draw it, is definitely a technique I like to play with.

That's much more of an animation technique than a comic book technique, using a reaction shot to imply the action occurring off-screen. Comic book artists tend to go right in for the money shot. You don't show a big fight by showing the faces of two people watching the fight.

You may see that technique more in animation, but to me, visual storytelling is no different in animation or in comics...

A lot of times, people have talked to me about what they perceive as the effect animation's had on my artwork. It's true that my drawing style is very tight. There's almost no wasted lines in my artwork, because in animation, you don't waste any lines when you have to draw 12 drawings for every second.

So I did learn a very tight, precise line style from animation, but what I did not get from animation was my sense of visual storytelling. That I just picked up from reading



comics. I mean, that's going to be the same in any medium. There's no difference in my mind between what Chuck Jones did in a Bugs Bunny cartoon and what Walt Kelly did in the *Pogo* [comic strip], except the two had to know how to use slightly different tools.

Do you ever get tired of being compared to Chuck Jones and Walt Kelly?

Not at all. I find it extremely flattering. Those are probably two of the people I think are the best cartoonists in the world. Just being in the same sentence with them is a huge thrill.

When I first read Bone #1, I immediately felt you had a kinship with both Jones and Kelly, without being a copycat in any way. There's a scene at the end of the first issue where you show winter falling—that's pure Chuck Jones. I also saw Kelly's attention to character and voice—although your line is simpler than his—and Jones's sense of pacing.

That would be great, if that's what was happening. I love that.

What I'm trying to put into my [book] that I remember from *Pogo* is the fact that when two characters in *Pogo* talk to each other, it's completely believable that the two characters are separate people. You never had the sense in *Pogo* that Walt Kelly was scripting both people's balloons. Your disbelief is suspended. It's like two people with two separate brains are yelling at each other, and have different takes on the subject that they're yelling about. That is really enjoyable to me when I'm reading *Pogo*. More of the humor comes from that, rather than the actual pun or gag. I try to get that kind of role-playing with the Bones, or whoever they're talking to.

Chuck Jones, his visual timing, with the snow dropping, that's the kind of thing I like about his stuff.

Getting back to Dave Sim for a moment, his collaborator, Gerhard, once told you, "Dave's been waiting 15 years for you to come along." By that, I assume he meant someone who was willing to take the chance on self-publishing the way Sim originally did with Cerebus in the 1970s. Did you ever try to sell Bone to another company, or did you want to self-publish from the start?

I started out wanting to publish myself. I mean, I owned my own animation studio for five years, so the concept of starting up a company was not intimidating to me. I knew how to do it. I didn't know if this was going to work or not, but I never had the desire to take it to a comic book publisher that was already going, and I'm perfectly happy where I am. I don't want to go to a regular publisher.

Do you plan on eventually taking this full circle, and doing an animated Bone film?

I would like to do that. I mean, in truth, I would like to have that happen. I do know a lot about the animation industry, [but] whether or not it can actually be done is a whole other question. I know how the whole game works, and I don't know if it's possible that I could get something like this done. So I'm keeping my fingers crossed, because I think it would be a lot of fun.

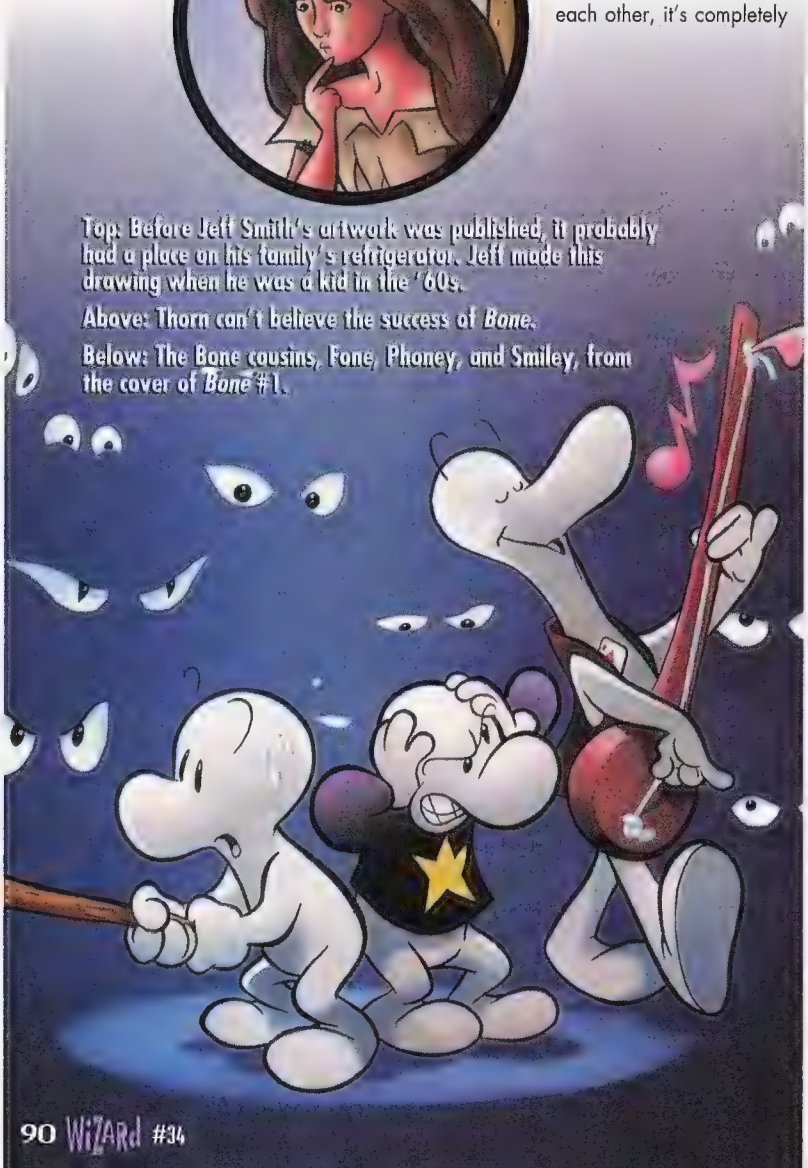
But my focus is on the comic. It's the comic, it's the art form of the cartoon, that made me leave the animation in the first place. It's the physical act of drawing and writing. So I'm always going to focus on the comic. If something like animation comes along, it will have to be considered by me as secondary to the comic.

I hear rumors of a Bone video game.

That's in the discussion stage now. There are still a lot of options to explore. I do have a good video game in my head, but nothing really concrete has happened [with the idea] yet.

Bone will be appearing in Disney Adventures Digest. How did that come about?

Marv Wolfman, the editor of the comics section over at *Disney Adventures Digest*, and Heidi McDonald, the assistant editor, approached me at WonderCon in 1993,



Top: Before Jeff Smith's artwork was published, it probably had a place on his family's refrigerator. Jeff made this drawing when he was a kid in the '60s.

Above: Thorn can't believe the success of *Bone*.

Below: The Bone cousins, Fone, Phoney, and Smiley, from the cover of *Bone* #1.

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and said they would like to have me do an eight-page original Bone story for the digest. That sounded good to me. There were a couple of things I wanted to make sure were clear: that it would be one-time-only, first-print rights, and that my copyright was on the books; just very simple things that they agreed to right away. So there was no problem.

Marv and Heidi are both very intelligent, creative, friendly, good comics people, and that was all very easy to work out. About a month later, they called me back and asked if, to warm up the audience to this new Bone story, they could reprint the first issue of *Bone*, [color it,] divide the book up into three eight-page sections, and run them in the three months before the new story. The new story will fit into the continuity of the Bone story, but it does stand alone. I will reprint it, because it takes place between *Bone* #13 and #14.

Disney Adventures Digest has one of the highest newsstand presences of any magazine, with point-of-purchase sales at supermarkets all over the country.

It's right next to *TV Guide*, there.

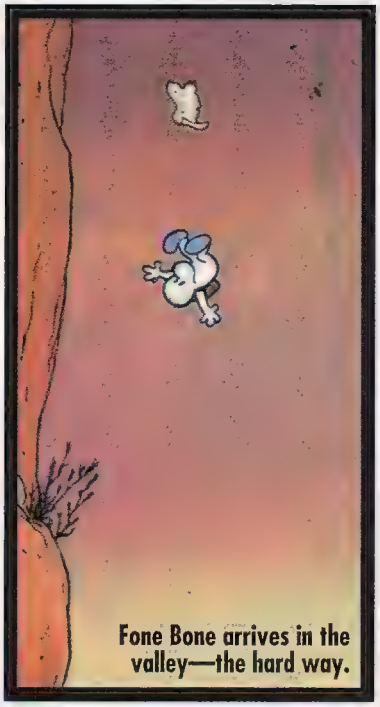
Right, and Weekly World News.

The circulation is something over a million. So I'm excited.

This could bring in a lot of new readers. What would you do if all at once you were inundated with hundreds of thousands of orders for the trade paperback from people who enjoyed the digest story, or whose children did, and wanted more?

I'd fill them. I hope that happens. I don't think it really will, but I'll be more than happy to print them up. We're up to the third printing [of the paperback] already since it premiered at the San Diego Comic Convention in 1993.

Which is also where I watched you accept an Eisner Award for Best Humor Comic. I can still picture you in your suit and tie, giving the evening's shortest acceptance speech: "Thanks." Were you nervous? It almost seemed like you were in shock.



Fone Bone arrives in the valley—the hard way.

I was in shock. I didn't really expect to get it. I wore a suit because I'd never been to an Eisner Awards presentation before, and I just assumed everybody would have suits on. So I had no idea that I would be making a statement with my suit. And yes, I was nervous. I got up there and I thought, "The less I say, the better chance I won't say anything dumb." I was very surprised, and very happy.

Do you have any plans after *Bone* is done with?

I have a couple of ideas, but I don't know how long *Bone*'s going to take. I'm not in a big hurry [to finish it, but] I have two specific ideas: one is another *Bone* project that is completely separate from the Valley story; another is more realistic and away from cartoons. I don't want to say what it is, because it's more fun to tease. [*Laughs*]

Can you ever think of yourself having a life after comics?

No, I am so fully in love with this art form that I can see maybe enhancing the art form by producing *Bone* for the screen, but that would be more like enhancing the comic. My whole life is cartooning, so I really don't see myself being an astronaut after this. [*Laughs*] But I am very seriously committed to cartooning.

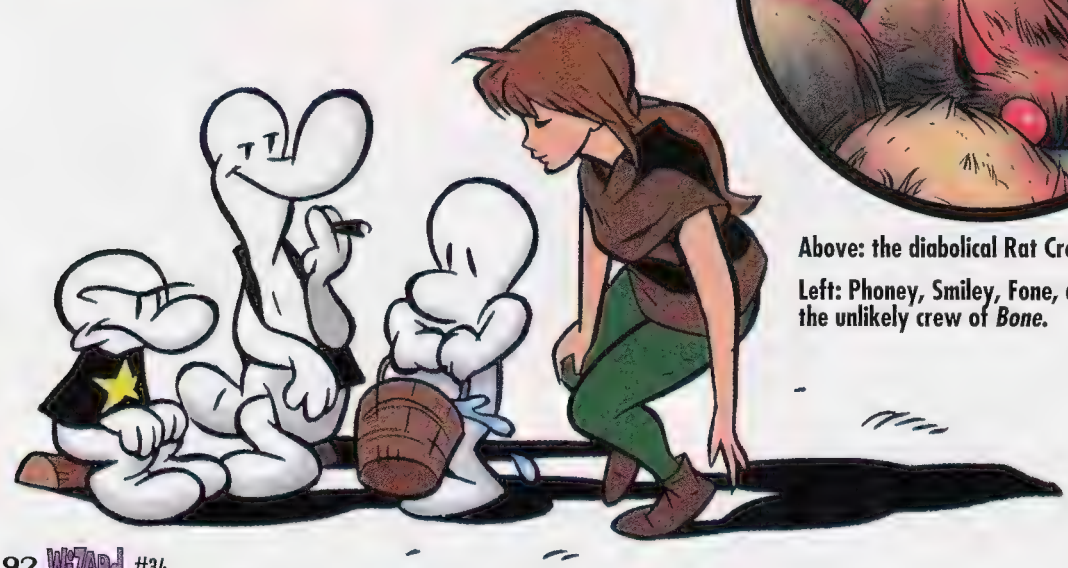
In closing, what is *Bone* to you?

It's a different outlet for me to be a storyteller. I've created an outlet that lets me play with all of my favorite things: it lets me draw in the kind of style that I like, it lets me tell stories. And the fun I get out of getting people interested in the stories is indescribable.

When you start something like this, you don't know if anyone's going to be interested. When you talk to people and they ask, "What's going to happen to Thorn?," that is so much fun. I can't imagine what can be better than that. ☆

Paul J. Grant is a freelance writer based in West Bloomfield, Mich.

If you can't find back issues of Bone *at your local shop, all of them are still in print. In addition, the first six were collected in* The Complete Bone Adventures Vol. 1. *The second volume, featuring a forward by Neil Gaiman, which reprints the next six, will be released in July. All are available from Smith's company, Cartoon Books, at P.O. Box 1583, Los Gatos, CA 95031-1583.*



Above: the diabolical Rat Creatures.

Left: Phoney, Smiley, Fone, and Thorn, the unlikely crew of *Bone*.

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WRITTEN BY BATTON LASH, ART BY JOHN BUSCEMA AND STAN GOLDBERG.
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MATT GROENING

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For a list of winners, available after July 31, 1994, send a stamped, self-addressed envelope to Draw Homer Winners, c/o Wizard Press, 151 Wells Ave., Congers, NY 10920-2064, or just look in future issues of *Wizard*!

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CONTEST
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Hey, get the lead out! You've only got till July 1, 1994!

STORM WARNING

LIGHTNING COMICS PREPARES TO WEATHER THE STORM OF COMPETING SUPERHERO UNIVERSES.

BY MARC PATTEN

The heroes of the Lightning Universe.

More than 10 new color comic universes were launched last year. By the time last summer rolled around, comic insiders were calling 1993 "The War of the New Superhero Universes." It was also known, not in the least bit affectionately, as "The Glut."

There's an aphorism which says that no one actually wins a war—you either survive or you don't. By that standard, newcomer Lightning Comics, which has introduced three titles to date and is eagerly planning to expand, was one of the companies which emerged on top.

Lightning's leading titles: **Perg** *(above) and* **Bloodfire** *(below).*

ORIGINS

Lightning began as the dream of president and founder Joseph A. Zyskowski. After being laid off from his third grade teaching job, Zyskowski, a longtime comic book collector, frequented comic book conventions as a dealer, selling old and new books. "I basically began looking at the amount of mass production that was happening—the huge amounts of reprints and gimmick covers that were coming into their own at the time—and it just seemed to me that with the amount of numbers that were being published of the same book, there wasn't any potential value for these books, [like the value] that the Silver Age books have," Zyskowski explains.

Lightning Comics promises never to print more than 250,000 copies of a first printing. It will also wait two years before reprinting its books. "[This policy] will protect the retailers, so there won't be a surplus of our books sitting around," says Steven V. Zyskowski, Lightning's vice president. It should also protect the collector, he adds: fans know that it's not too unusual to see a book that's hot one week turn up in the bargain bins the next week due to retailer overordering.

Joseph, who grew up reading *Uncanny X-Men* by Chris Claremont and John Byrne, *Daredevil* by Frank Miller, and *New Teen Titans* by Marv Wolfman and George Pérez, was befuddled by today's comic book "heroes."

"I was used to heroes who had values and insights and personalities," he says. "They weren't just these mindless characters that went around and killed people for good, the way that villains kill people for evil." Joseph wanted to create three-dimensional superhero characters who were vulnerable—characters who were human.

These ideas led to the creation of Lightning's first hero, Bloodfire, whose blood literally catches fire when exposed to air. The character's origin takes a cue from a popular comic theme: government meddling with human biology. While on a mission, marine Brian Reace was severely wounded. In order to save his life, he was subjected to Dr. Thorpe's experimental procedures, which were designed to rewrite a person's genetic code and create a "super soldier."

In previous trials on laboratory animals, their immune systems had resisted the Amino-Enhancement Formula (AEF), rendering it ineffective. The doctor's solution: he infected Reace with the HIV virus, which destroys the immune system.

Not only does the AEF give Bloodfire enhanced strength and agility, it also keeps the HIV virus in check, so he won't develop a full-blown case of AIDS. However, Bloodfire remains a carrier of HIV, which causes serious problems with his fiancée and his fellow marines. As such, Bloodfire is one of the few comic characters to be infected by one of the world's most dreaded diseases.

"In the beginning, we were running on a huge amount of ambition and enthusiasm, and we were somewhat blinded at first to the product that we were creating," Joseph says of Lightning's first effort. "*Bloodfire* #1-#4 I think storywise were OK, but artwise they were the best we could do at the time.

"We are now trying to rebound from the necessity of having to work with unknown talent back in the beginning because we didn't have a lot of money. When I was laid off from teaching, I was receiving unemployment benefits, [which were] what I used to start this company. This is very much a grass roots company."

Joseph Zyskowski first envisioned Lightning, but he says he couldn't have started it without his younger brother Steven. "In the beginning, Steve was still in college and getting ready to graduate. He graduated with a public relations degree, and was looking at what I was doing... He really got excited about the idea of being able to contribute from a marketing aspect."

Steven put his degree to use by writing press releases. Thanks to his efforts, Lightning received attention from *USA Today*, CNN, and other organizations.

"We had taken *Bloodfire*

"We're not out trying to print collectibles—we're out trying to print entertainment." —Steven Zyskowski

Bloodfire, *Perg*, and all artwork and characters shown ™ & © Joseph A. Zyskowski.

Bloodfire battles his chrome-covered nemesis, Captain Storman.

promos to the Motor City Comic Con in March of 1993, and we ended up selling 2,200 copies. Steven was looking at an opportunity. He basically made the decision that he would be able to contribute what Lightning Comics needed to become successful only if he was doing Lightning Comics full-time," Joseph recalls. Steven quit his job in a management training program to devote himself full-time to running Lightning's marketing campaign.

Bloodfire #1 debuted in June 1993. It sold more than 40,000 copies—an amazing amount for a new, largely unknown company. To no one's surprise, the premier issue of each new Lightning title—*Judgment Day* in September, and *Perg* (pronounced "purge") in October—sold more copies than the previous one.

Joseph says that there was a definite strategy behind Lightning's first three series. "We basically wanted to come out and tackle three different genres of superhero comic books: a solo superhero/super soldier-type character, which was Bloodfire; the superteam, which was Judgment Day; and then the supernatural vigilante, which was Perg. We felt those three were the most important, significant, and well-received forms."

Was Perg modeled on the dark vigilante/antihero characters found in contemporary comics? "Absolutely not," Joseph says. "First off, Perg is a hero. He is not controlled by evil, but he has this inner conflict he is trying to deal with. He's more of a three-dimensional character."

Perg, born Ramen Alexander Perg, was a Chicago police officer in the late 1800s. Under the influence of Lucifer, he became an opium addict and serial killer, and was eventually stoned to death by the angry townsfolk of Chicago. Steven explains: "The people of Chicago held a public burial for the villain, to help put the city's fears to rest. They were so afraid that Ramen might return from the dead that they bound his wrists and ankles with chains and placed a sacred gold cross on his chest to ward off evil spirits."

In the nether world, when Perg's judgment day arrived, God disagreed with Lucifer on where Perg's soul should reside. Apparently, God insisted that Perg had been born with a good soul but had been unfairly influenced by the devil. The end result was that Perg was returned to Earth for 500 years to let him determine, through his own actions and without any other influences, where his soul will reside. "Perg's goal on Earth is to gain admittance into heaven, so he can be reunited with his dead fiancée, Elizabeth," Steven says.

"He continues to wear the cross that was placed upon his chest by the people of Chicago. Perg is able to transform the cross into a dagger, slam it into the foreheads of evildoers, and exorcise their evil," he continues. "When the dagger is withdrawn, a cross mark appears on the cleansed person's forehead while they are unconscious. When the people who have been cleansed by Perg awaken, they are free to chart a new direction for their lives."

Of course, Perg's biggest problem is that Lucifer cheats. "In November or December, we're going to be doing some major things with *Perg* that will knock people's socks off," Joseph says. "The reason that Lucifer has this animosity toward Ramen Perg has to do with Ramen's father, Nathan. Nathan Perg was an exorcist in the early 1800s who killed the Anti-Christ. As a result of that, Lucifer said, 'An eye for an eye! A son for a son!,' and went after [Nathan's] only child, Ramen."

Although *Perg* involves scattered religious references, Joseph insists that Lightning hasn't taken any flak for them, although the company hasn't gone looking for a fight, either. "Perg has been given a second chance by God, and he's decided that what he wants to do is cleanse the world of evil."

Despite the company's initial success, Lightning has just announced that its second title, *Judgment Day*, has been canceled. "The concept came about as a result of being overly ambitious," Joseph elaborates. "We wanted to create a team book, and we assumed it was going to involve the same amount of time, attention, and care as creating a solo hero. It is an entirely different animal. It involves a totally different skill level as a writer to pull off something as complex as a team book."

"I was used to heroes who had values and insights and personalities. They weren't just these mindless characters that went around and killed people for good, the way that villains kill people for evil."
—Joseph Zyskowski

Judgment Day was Lightning's least popular title, and took the greatest amount of effort to produce. The title's last issue, #8, ships in May. "We felt if we could eliminate one book...and focus on just the other two, then we could end up pouring an immense amount of quality into those two books," Joseph says.

FUTURES

The initial plan for *Judgment Day* was to finish the current storyline and then restart the series with a zero issue. Instead, Lightning elected to provide a synopsis at the end of issue #8, disclosing the conclusion of the story that was to appear in #9 and #10. Lightning still intends to relaunch *Judgment Day* in the hands of somebody experienced in writing team books. "When we do it, we're going to do it right," the elder Zyskowski says, adding that although the revamped series may contain some of the original characters, the new book will be vastly different from its predecessor.

The second half of 1994 will bring changes galore to the Lightning Comics lineup. The company will switch all of its titles to a mini-series format in order to expose the characters to a fresh audience. (All books will contain an origin page, so that new readers can jump in and understand the protagonist's background.) Lightning will continue to publish only two books per month, part of its effort to focus on quality rather than quantity.

"In *Bloodfire* #12, Reace is kicked out of the military as a result of being HIV-positive," Joseph says. "That will allow a major change in the character. We then go into a #0 book, which explains Brian Reace's decision to join the military in more depth, and then we take a hiatus. In November, we'll come out with a new mini-series that will just blow people away!"

Joseph laughs. "This should help build up people's interests again, because they'll have to wait for the new mini-series to come out—while we tease them for all that time!"

Perg, which will be done by artists Paul Abrams and David Mowry starting with #6, will go on hiatus after issue #10. "In November, we'll come out with a #0 book, and then proceed into a mini-series format."

When the company's current titles go on hiatus, Lightning fans won't have to do without Lightning comics. Two characters, War Party and DreadWolf, will be featured in *Lightning Comics Presents* #1, a one-shot shipping in May, before each gets his own mini-series.

War Party will debut in July. The title character, an assassin, first appeared in *Judgment Day* #3, Lightning's first book to showcase a villain. DreadWolf, who premiered in *Perg* #3, will get his own mini-series in August, temporarily replacing *Perg* on Lightning's product schedule.

"The art team on *War Party* is Terral Lawrence, who is the current *Bloodfire* penciler, with David Mowry—the current *Perg* inker—doing the inks," Joseph says. "David has done a lot of work for NOW Comics on *The Green Hornet*, and brings with him an immense amount of professionalism.

"As far as *DreadWolf* #1 is concerned, we have Paul Abrams, who is the new *Perg* penciler, penciling the series. Paul is just going crazy with the thing, because he loves werewolves. So it's a great book for him to do, and it really shows! Gary Barnes is the inker on the book. He is a newcomer to the industry, but has been working with Paul for probably three or four years in an apprenticeship capacity. It's something where they know how to work with each other very well, and they're very happy with the work they do. I'm really very excited about the *DreadWolf* series. It's really going to be high-powered stuff."

What else is in store for Lightning? In order to attract more attention to its books, it has produced a commercial. As soon as it's approved by the networks, it'll be broadcast in select areas during comic book-related programming, like Marvel's *X-Men* on the Fox network. Also in the works: a trading card series featuring all-new artwork.

Both Zyskowski brothers feel that there's still too much hype and not enough quality product in the comic book industry. "There is promotion overload," says Joseph. "People are saying, 'Enough is enough. There is just too much happening. I can't keep up with it anymore.'"

Joseph believes that today's fans are "looking for something that's fun. They're looking for something that they will like to read—something that is different—and they're not necessarily looking for hype.

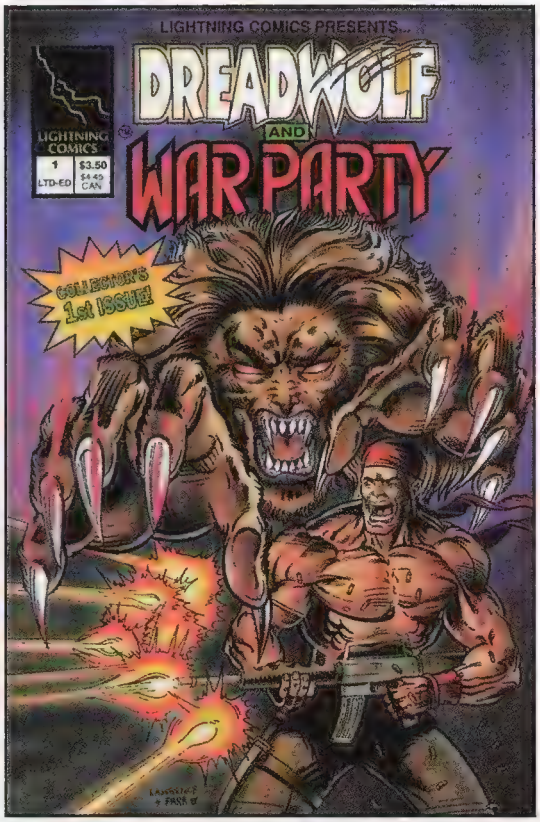
"Lightning books are different, because we focus on the individual characters first. There is a universe, but we didn't want there to be a centralized theme as to how all these people ended up getting their power."

"The characters are original, and we don't do offshoots of other companies' characters," adds Zach Zaitonia, Lightning's editorial and marketing assistant.

"I think 1994 is going to be a good year for us, because we're ready for it," Steven Zyskowski declares. "We're not out trying to print collectibles—we're out trying to print entertainment. And if that entertainment becomes a collectible, then there's nothing wrong with that at all." ☆

Marc Patten is a freelance writer who wishes to thank all the guys at Heroes World Distribution for their support. He's currently wondering why he's based in New York City.

"Lightning books are different, because we focus on the individual characters first. There is a universe, but we didn't want there to be a centralized theme as to how all these people ended up getting their power."
—Joseph Zyskowski



DreadWolf and War Party grace the cover of this* Lightning Comics Presents *one-shot. Both are headed for solo mini-series later in the year.

TOYING around • around • around • around

WITH SEAN AUNE

UNDER NEW MANAGEMENT

Hello, and welcome to Toying Around, now under new management. As the column's former writer, Brian Cunningham, mentioned last month, my name is Sean Aune, and I'm the new curator of Toying Around.

I'm sure the first question on your mind is, "What the heck are his qualifications?" Good question. I'm 22 years old, and I can't remember a day of my life when I wasn't surrounded by toys. Unlike other mothers, mine never made me throw my playthings away, so I'm now surrounded by 22 years of toys! At age 4, I started collecting comic books, and at age 15, I opened Splash Page Comics, a comics store in Kirksville, Mo.

In 1989, when I felt the store was on its feet, I expanded into collectible toys. Since then, the company has enlarged both its physical location and its mail-order division. Splash Page Comics and Toys International now sells to people in all 50 states and 23 foreign countries.

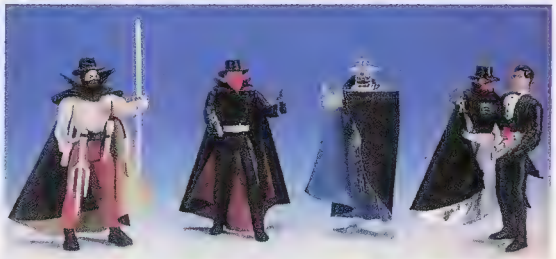
As time progressed, I was occasionally asked to edit, fact check, write, and advise on various price guides, some of which appeared in these very pages. Although you may not know my name, you've probably seen my work.

Toy Fair '94 Continues

So with that out of the way, let's bring on the news. In this issue, I'll be covering some of the toy lines that were presented at Toy Fair '94 but which weren't included in our last issue due to space and time constraints. Toy Fair was an unbelievable exhibition of so many toy lines that, believe me, no one article could ever cover it all. In fact, Toy Fair information will probably continue to pop up in this column all year long.

First up is the Shadow toy line from Kenner. Some of you might be familiar with the old Shadow radio shows, or with the books from DC Comics, or, more recently, Dark Horse Comics, but these figures are based on the new movie starring Alec Baldwin in the title role. These figures have a real 1940s feel to them. Eight regular figures were shown at Toy Fair: Ninja Shadow, Quick Draw Shadow, Ambush Shadow, Transforming

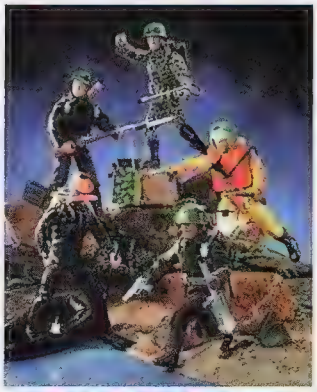
THE SHADOW ™ & © 1994 THE CONDE' NAST PUBLICATIONS INC.



From left to right: Ninja Shadow, Quick Draw Shadow, Ambush Shadow, and Transforming Lament Cranston.

From left to right: Mongol Warrior, Shiwan Khan, Battle Shiwan Khan, and Dr. Mocquino.

G.I. JOE ™ & © 1994 HASBRO INC.



The G.I. Joe 30th Anniversary Hall of Famers. Clockwise from top: Action Marine, Action Pilot, Action Soldier, Action Sailor, and Action Soldier

STARGATE ™ & © 1994 LE STUDIO CANAL+

Look for Hasbro's Stargate assortment coming this summer! Back row: Daniel Jackson, Attack Pilot Horus, Anubis, and Lt. Kowalsky. Front: Ra, Skaara, Palace Guard Horus, and Colonel O'Neil.

Lamont Cranston, Mongol Warrior, Shiwan Khan, Battle Shiwan Khan, and Dr. Mocquino. A deluxe electronic figure, Bullet-Proof Shadow, was also presented. The sculpting and coloring on these figures are really first-rate; I especially liked Battle Shiwan Khan!

Of course, anyone who's going to fight crime needs wheels. The Shadow gets around in his Nightmist Cycle, which I think may be the most uncomfortable-looking motorcycle ever; the Mirage SX 100 Convertible; and the Shadow Cab, a souped-up, stylish 1940s cab. Of course, bad guys also need transportation, so be on the lookout for the Shiwan Khan Dragon Bike with a sidecar and launching dragon-head missile. Later in the year, you might also see a playset of the Shadow's hideout.

Tyco's Cadillacs and Dinosaurs line of toys is based on the Mark Schultz comic series published by various companies, which has spawned a Saturday morning cartoon on CBS. The figure portion of the line consists of good guys Jack "Cadillac" Tenrec, Mustapha Cairo, Hannah Dundee, and Jungle Fighting Jack Tenrec; Poachers Hammer Terhune and Vice Terhune; and Hermes and the Zeke, two dinosaurs. These toys are available in stores now.

The good and bad guys will ride around in contemporary vehicles with a futuristic twist. Jack and his fellow heroes can cruise in style in a 1950s Cadillac, or Jack can fly solo in his Glider. The bad guys only have Hammer's Tribike. These vehicles will be available soon.

The line will eventually include two larger dinosaurs, a Triceratops and a Kentrosaurus, which are armed and ready to help Jack fight the Poachers. In the fall, look for a Jack's Garage playset and a kid-sized Nitro Express.

Stargate, a film starring Kurt Russell and James Spader, will spawn a toy line from Hasbro. The movie seems to be a cross between *Raiders of the Lost Ark*, *Aliens*, and Egyptian mythology. Although the picture won't be released until August, the figures will be out in June. Each action figure will come with a miniature "artifact" from the movie. The figures are about three and three-quarter inches tall and include Daniel Jackson, Ra, Skaara, Lt. Kowalsky, Palace Guard Horus, Colonel O'Neil, Attack Pilot Horus, and Anubis. The heroes of *Stargate* can get around in their All-Terrain Cruiser or on the back of the Mastadge, a large hairy creature. The followers of Ra can attack from above in their Winged Glider.

I thought *Stargate* was one of the best new toy lines at Toy Fair. The toys were presented to us in a very theatrical manner: there was one small explosion, a couple of actors, a sampling of raw footage from the movie, and a few other surprises. At first, I thought that the glitz had persuaded me to think that the toys were cool, but then I got to play with the figures, and I was highly impressed. The detailing is wonderful, the packaging is beautiful, and this is a line that I am eagerly awaiting. June can't come soon enough!

Normally, I'm not one to go talking about what I think will be a hot collectible, but I don't feel there will be another one quite like this: the 30th anniversary G.I. Joes have the potential to be some of the hottest toys in years. This year, Hasbro will release 12-inch Hall of Fame figures, which are reproductions of the original figures from 1964. The anniversary Joes will be marketed in black boxes with gold foil stamping, and each will be packaged with replicas of the figure's original accessories, uniform, and box. These toys will be produced in limited amounts, but the print runs have not yet been announced.

Also be on the lookout for the three-and-three-quarter-inch versions of the original G.I. Joes, packaged individually or in a boxed set with a bonus figure. While these will be desirable, I feel the real collectibility will be in the larger figures.

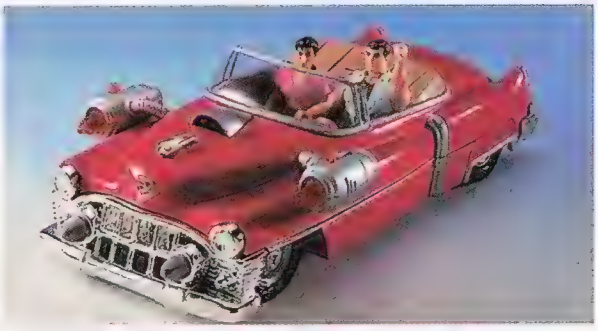
A question that's asked a lot around here at *Wizard* is why Toy Biz changed the colors of the Cannonball figure during its production run. I consulted some people at the company, and the answer was fairly simple. They'd wanted a purple figure from the start, but the paint they chose had an unknown drawback: when it was molded to the plastic, the color changed from purple to pink. Many figures were produced before anyone saw the problem, so instead of trashing what had been done, they rereleased the figure and changed the color of the paint to a darker purple. The pink version is the rare one and the revised purple one is not.

In other late-breaking news, I've been informed that Mike Allred and some of his other Legend cohorts are planning to release action figures of their respective characters. Allred's Madman will be sculpted by Randy Bowen, a renowned sculptor, and will stand six or seven inches tall. A manufacturer is "up in the air," but Allred hopes to have the figure released by Christmas. It's not yet known which other Legend creators will release action figures, but it's expected that Frank Miller, Art Adams, and Mike Mignola, who are all toy enthusiasts, will partake in the fun.

Well, guys and gals, that's all for my first installment. Remember, if you have any questions or suggestions, write to me at: Toying Around, c/o Wizard Press, 151 Wells Ave., Congers, NY 10920-2064. Until next time, see you in aisle 7C.

Cadillacs and Dinosaurs © 1994 Mark Schultz

Clockwise from top right: Mustapha Cairo, Jack "Cadillac" Terrec, Hammer Terhune, Triceratops, Hannah Dundee, and Vice Terhune.



Jack's Cadillac with Jack and Hanna figures (figures sold separately).

HOMEMADE HEROES

The four third place winners this month receive an *X-Force* #25 signed by Greg Capullo and *Maxx* #1 and #2 signed by Sam Kieth. The two second place winners receive a set of the Jean Grey and Scott Summers proposal and wedding issues (*Uncanny X-Men* #308-#310 signed by Dan Green and *X-Men* #30 signed by Andy Kubert), a Hot Wheels Spawnmobile, and a Horizon Green Goblin model kit. The grand prize winner receives a Hot Wheels Spawnmobile signed by Todd McFarlane, a set of the Jean Grey and Scott Summers proposal and wedding issues (*Uncanny X-Men* #308-#310 signed by Dan Green and *X-Men* #30 signed by Andy Kubert), a *Batman* #500 signed by Joe Quesada, and a Horizon Green Goblin model kit. If you're interested in entering the homemade figure contest, send entries to: Figure of the Month Contest, c/o Toying Around, 151 Wells Ave., Congers, NY 10920-2064. (No Polaroids—and make sure you focus, dammit!)

HORIZON

Special thanks to Horizon for donating the model kits. You guys rule!

DEFENSOR ™ & © MARVEL ENTERTAINMENT GROUP

"I'm the suckiest superhero ever created."
Defensor, the Grand Champion of Lameness, by Trevor Ellis of Brockton, Mass., made with a Toy Biz Silver Surfer figure and a Toy Biz Captain America shield.

THE STILT-MAN ™ & © MARVEL ENTERTAINMENT GROUP

"From up here, I can see right into that apartment buil...Hey! That guy's naked!"
The always-impressive Stilt-Man, by Jack Fischetti of Bogota, N.J., made with a Toy Biz Flash head, a Secret Wars Dr. Doom body, and wooden dowels for legs.

THE PLANET ™ & © ALAN MOORE, STEPHEN BISSETTE, AND RICK VEITCH

"Man...I could really use a coffee enema."
The Planet of 1963's Mystery Incorporated, by Michael Wolstrom of Ames, Iowa, made from a Toy Biz Hulk.

HAMMER AND ANVIL ™ & © MARVEL ENTERTAINMENT GROUP

"Ebony...and Ivory..."
The singing duo of Hammer and Anvil by, yes, Trevor Ellis, earning his title as "He who has way too much free time." Both were made from Toy Biz Silver Surfers.

TERROR ™ & © MARVEL ENTERTAINMENT GROUP

"No way, Defensor... I'm the suckiest character in existence. Want proof? Take a look at this tie."
Terror, by Tom Lotz of Tallahassee, Fla., made from a Conehead body, a Super Mario Brothers Goomba head, and a Toy Biz Joker hat.

GLADIATOR ™ & © MARVEL ENTERTAINMENT GROUP

"Why, if I had eyes, I'd go to a different barber!"
Gladiator, by Mark R. Comeau of Millbury, Mass., made with a Gideon figure and Stryfe cape.

MR. MONSTER ™ & © MICHAEL T. GILBERT

"This bed is nice and comf...hey—is there a camera behind that ceiling mirror?"
Mr. Monster, by Matt Derbyshire of Niagara Falls, Ontario, Canada, made from a Toy Biz Flash.

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PALMER'S PICKS

Comics Experience

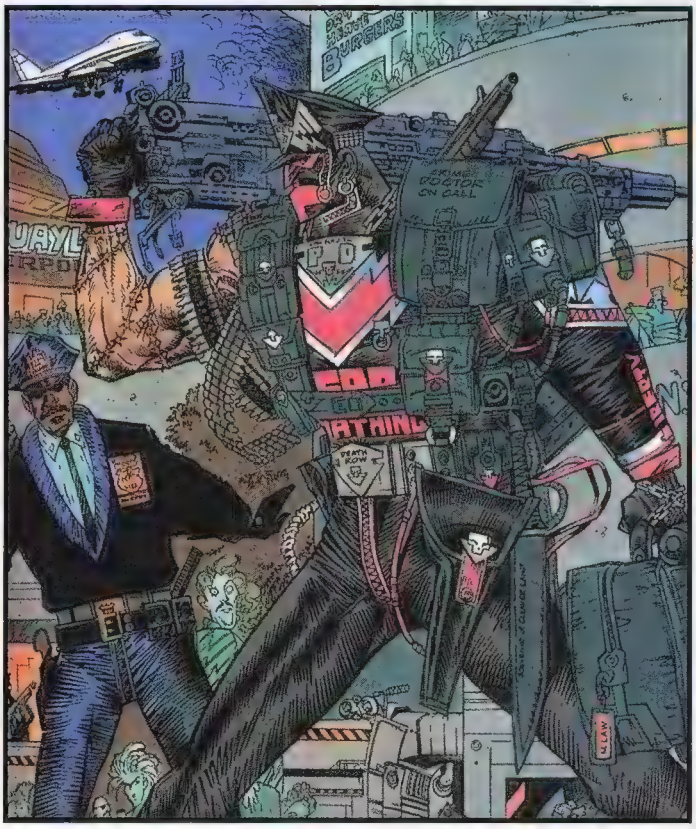
In the mid-'80s, a number of revisionist superhero comics appeared. Works like Alan Moore and Dave Gibbons' *Watchmen*, Frank Miller's *Batman: The Dark Knight Returns*, and Rick Veitch's *The One* deconstructed the superhero myth and looked at it with an analytic and investigative eye. Pat Mills and Kevin O'Neill's outrageous and ultraviolent *Marshal Law* stands in stark contrast with those comics. If *Watchmen*, *The Dark Knight*, and *The One* dissect superheroes with precision instruments, then *Marshal Law* is a completely over-the-top examination of superheroes.

Epic Comics first published *Marshal Law* in a six-issue run which began in 1987. It shocked and offended just about everybody, since it featured scenes of destruction, mutilation, and drug use, with the occasional severed body part or nude figure thrown in for good measure. The original storyline, "Fear and Loathing," introduced a world in which superheroes are dangerous psychotics, except for the title character, a slightly sadistic San Futuro police officer who kills just about every "hero" he meets. Against a postapocalyptic backdrop, the Marshal investigates the sick crimes of Sleepman, a disfigured criminal who rapes and kills women dressed as the superheroine Celeste, and his connection to Public Spirit, America's favorite hero.

Superhero subgenres and specific superheroes are parodied through harsh, abrasive situations and cruel jokes.

"Fear and Loathing" was followed by the *Crime and Punishment: Marshal Law Takes Manhattan* one-shot, also from Epic. Mills and O'Neill turned their attention to the Marvel superheroes in this story, in which Marshal Law disposes of a group of heroes who bear more than just a passing resemblance to Mr. Fantastic, Thor, Captain America, and Dr. Strange.

Marshal Law next appeared in *Toxic!*, a short-lived weekly British comic anthology published by Apocalypse. Those serialized stories, "Kingdom of the Blind" and "The Hateful Dead," were later collected and published as a one-shot and a two-part mini-series, respectively, by Apocalypse. Once again, Marshal Law disposes of "heroes," this time a thinly disguised version of Batman in "Kingdom of the Blind" and an army of undead Golden Age superheroes in "The Hateful Dead." Apocalypse folded before it could print the second part of *The Hateful Dead*, but Dark Horse published the conclusion to the story in *Super Babylon*.



Kevin O'Neill's art for *Marshal Law* is truly disturbing and disgusting. In *Marshal Law*, he pulls no punches, filling pages with big guns and phallic symbols as well as brutal depictions of violence and destruction. His characters are rendered in a sharp, angular style, and the destruction is so exaggerated and extreme that the reader can only be disgusted.

Pat Mills's writing is layered with both satire and parody. He exposes the ironic differences between the messages heroes give and the way their actions are actually interpreted. Superhero subgenres and specific superheroes are parodied through harsh, abrasive situations and cruel jokes. Mills's character is so versatile that he can be placed into many different situations and still be believable. Not only has Marshal Law gone up against superheroes, he's also taken on the monster from the *Alien* films.

The Harvey Kurtzman superhero parodies from EC Comics's original *Mad* had a strong influence on *Marshal Law*. Stories like "Superduperman!" and "Bat Boy and Rubin," both drawn by artist Wally Wood, were full of throwaway background jokes and slogans written

on characters and walls. *Marshal Law* makes full use of those devices, depicting characters in gaudy, ridiculous costumes, and featuring offensive and suggestive slogans like "Nuke Me Slowly" and "Fear and Loathing" scrawled on people, guns, cars, and buildings.

Revisionist superhero comics have spawned a host of "grim and gritty" copycats that seem to miss the point completely. *Marshal Law* is one of the original revisionist stories, and the main reason for its longevity and appeal is that it doesn't take itself too seriously. All of the destruction and mayhem is done with tongue firmly in cheek.

Update: In the "Recommended Reading" section of Palmer's Picks in *Wizard* #32, the first part of my look at minicomics, I mentioned the *City Limits Gazette*, a newsletter about the small press. Well, silly me, I forgot to mention that the *CLG* doesn't exist anymore! If you sent any money to Steve Willis, the editor of *CLG*, don't worry: he's a nice guy, and will probably send you some of his comics instead. If you're still interested in seeing a newsletter of some sort, check out *The Poopsheet* from Rick Bradford. Send a dollar (four will get you a subscription) to Rick Bradford, P.O. Box 161095, Fort Worth, TX 76161-1095.

I'm still interested in letters of any kind (especially proposals for indecent acts), so send your stuff to Palmer's Picks, c/o Wizard Press, 151 Wells Ave., Congers, NY 10920-2064. ☆

Tom Palmer Jr. is a New Jersey-based writer who means the world to Keith, Bharat, Jamie, Bryan, Brian, Pete, and Peter.

PICK OF THE MONTH

Twisted Sisters Comics: Diane Noomin is the editor of this diverse collection by some of today's top women cartoonists, including cover artist Mary Fleener, Carol Tyler, Carol Moiseiwitsch, and Fiona Smythe. *Twisted Sister* is published by Kitchen Sink Press.

Tom's Recommended Reading

Marshal Law has an interesting publishing history. The comic has been printed by a number of publishers, so it takes a bit of work to track down.

Fear and Loathing: The original story was published by Epic from 1987 to 1989 as a six-issue series. The story was later collected with a new cover, an introduction by Clive Barker, and a new eight-page prologue.

Crime and Punishment: Marshal Law Takes Manhattan: This bookshelf format special was published by Epic in 1989. Mark Nelson inked over Kevin O'Neill's pencils, and Mark Chiarello helped out on the coloring.

Kingdom of the Blind: Apocalypse published this story, which was originally serialized in *Toxic!*, as a one-shot. *Toxic!* and both of Apocalypse's Marshal Law collections were distributed very spottily in the United States, so it might be difficult to track these books down.

The Hateful Dead: This is another serialized story collected by Apocalypse. Apocalypse went out of business before it could release the second half of this mini-series. As stated above, this comic was not widely distributed, so copies may be hard to find.

Super Babylon: Dark Horse saved Marshal Law from limbo by publishing this conclusion to *The Hateful Dead*. Since not many people saw the first part of the story, this comic didn't make much sense to anybody.

Blood, Sweat, and Fears: To make everybody happy, Dark Horse published this trade paperback of the two collections from Apocalypse and the conclusion to "The Hateful Dead." The book has a new cover by O'Neill, a selection of promo art, an afterward by Trina Robbins, and two rebuttals by Pat Mills.

Law in Hell: Marshal Law returned to Epic to take on Pinhead from the *Hellraiser* films. Surprisingly, the story works without diluting the concept behind either character. The story ran two issues, with coloring by Steve Buccellato.

Secret Tribunal: Dark Horse released the first part of this two-issue storyline near the end of 1993. The conclusion should be out by summertime.

MARSHAL LAW™ & © PAT MILLS AND KEVIN O'NEILL

COMIC BOOK INTELLIGENCE QUOTIENT

CBIQ

It's time to test all that wonderfully worthless comic book knowledge you've accumulated from spending hour after hour reading comics when you should've been out playin' craps. What follows are 25 of the hardest questions ever slapped together by a band of sissy fanboys. We've also included the Fanboy-O-Meter, which you can use to gauge how macho you are.

This month, we're grading your comic knowledge against farts.

score	rank
0-5	The Woofer Fart (all bark, no bite)
6-12	The "Bad Dog" Fart (a dog fart after he eats too much cheese)
13-19	The "Pull Cord" Fart (sounds like someone pulling the cord on a lawnmower; smells like the big fat unwashed guy pulling the cord)
20-24	The S.B.D. Fart (Silent But Deadly.)
25	The Dreaded "It felt like a fart, but it was...you know" Fart

1. When Professor Xavier first met Nightcrawler, Nightcrawler was:
A) in a carnival sideshow.
B) languishing in a cage where he'd been left to die.
C) about to have a stake driven through his heart.
D) passing himself off as Ethel Merman and doing two shows a week in Vegas.

2. What's Puma's real name?
A) Benedict Starmoon
B) Thomas Fireheart
C) Kyle Hawke
D) Thomas Bearclaw

3. After Spawn died, Spawn's wife, Wanda Blake, married:
A) Terry Fitzgerald.
B) Al Simmons.
C) Tony Lobito.
D) Kyle Zimmerman.

4. Which of the following characters has not contracted or died from the mutant legacy virus?
A) Madrox
B) Pyro
C) Illyana
D) Sauron

5. The name of Catwoman's butler is:
A) Alfred.
B) Jarvis.
C) Wilder.
D) Lyons.

6. What nationality was Kraven the Hunter?
A) Russian
B) Argentinean
C) German
D) French (which would explain why he's so annoying)

7. The X-Mansion is located in:
A) New York.
B) New Jersey.
C) Connecticut.
D) Staten Island.

8. Which organization created the Bizarro clone?
A) S.T.A.R. Labs
B) LexCorp
C) Project Cadmus
D) General Mills

9. The original roster of the West Coast Avengers consisted of:
A) Hawkeye, Mockingbird, Wonder Man, Vision, and Tigra.
B) Hawkeye, Mockingbird, Iron Man, the Shroud, and Tigra.
C) Hawkeye, Mockingbird, Wonder Man, Iron Man, and Tigra.
D) more second-rate characters than you can shake a copy of *Force Works* #1 at.

10. Old Hulk nemesis General "Thunderbolt" Ross once possessed the power of which supervillain?
A) Zzzax
B) T-Rex
C) Abomination
D) Cap'n Eggs

11. The Venom symbiote came from:
A) another planet.
B) A.I.M.
C) a toxic dump.
D) the Negative Zone.

12. Jocasta's mind was patterned after which Avenger's brain waves?
A) Tigra
B) Moondragon
C) Wasp
D) Scarlet Witch

13. Which of the following Titans didn't go bad?
A) Raven
B) Terra
C) Jericho
D) Speedy

14. Egghead was killed by:
A) Hawkeye.
B) Tigra. (Geez...how many times have we mentioned Tigra so far?)
C) Wonder Man.
D) Hank Pym.

15. Who killed Robin II?
A) The Scarecrow
B) The Joker
C) Abattoir
D) Tim Drake (he really, really wanted to wear short pants and get close to Batman, if you know what I mean)

16. The powers of the Marvel Universe's Black Cat were originally augmented by:
A) Power Broker.
B) Brother Voodoo.
C) Dr. Faustus.
D) Kingpin.

17. What was the name of Bruce Banner's anti-Hulk squad?
A) H.U.L.K.E.D.
B) The Hulkbusters
C) A.H.S.
D) Victims of Ellison

18. Strong Guy has a fetish for:
A) brandy.
B) whiskey.
C) beer.
D) guys with leather masks.

19. What was the fate of Reed and Sue Richards' second child?
A) It was aborted to save Sue's life
B) It was stillborn
C) It was given to a Watcher so he could watch over it and make sure it learned to control its reality-warping powers
D) The Thing ate it

20. In the DC Universe, Matrix became which Superman supporting character?
A) Lex Luthor II
B) The Guardian
C) Snapdragon
D) Supergirl

21. Kraven the Hunter was hired to bring in Spider-Man by:
A) the Chameleon.
B) Donald Trump.
C) J. Jonah Jameson.
D) the Tinkerer.

22. Who was the first-ever Avenger-in-Training?
A) Hawkeye
B) Spider-Woman
C) Captain Marvel II
D) Tigr...whoop, almost said her name again!

23. Cyclops and Havok are:
A) immune to each other's blasts.
B) both "Class Omega" mutants.
C) both clones of their father.
D) really Siegfried and Roy.

24. What was the Human Torch and Spider-Man's secret meeting place?
A) On top of the Fantastic Four skyscraper
B) On top of the Empire State Building
C) On top of the Statue of Liberty
D) Under the porch out back

25. The Starwatchers are the descendants of:
A) L.E.G.I.O.N.
B) the H.A.R.D. Corps.
C) the Galactic Guardians.
D) the Wristwatchers.

☆

stupid but

Back in the mid-'40s, Superman became so popular that DC created Superboy. That was kinda lame, but acceptable. Then, in the late '50s, Supergirl was introduced. This was stretching things a bit, but she proved to be pretty popular, which opened the door for one of the stupidest collection of characters ever to appear in comics: the Superpets. Krypto, Superman's pet dog, was fairly lame. Streaky the Supercat was silly. Comet the Superhorse was stupid. Beppo the Supermonkey was the worst. All in all, a dark page in comic book history. Thank god *Crisis* wiped 'em all out.

THE STUPID...MAKE THAT SUPERPETS ™ & © DC COMICS

A	N	S	W	E	R	S
1.C	2.B	3.A	4.D	5.C	6.A	7.A	8.B	9.C
10.A	11.A	12.C	13.D	14.A	15.B	16.D	17.B	18.B
19.B	20.D	21.C	22.C	23.A	24.C	25.B		

CONTEST

Mars Attacks!

Those pesky Martians have decided to invade Earth, and to help celebrate the end of civilization as we know it, Topps Comics and Wizard Press have cooked up a contest in which you can win some great Mars Attacks stuff before you're fried to a crisp in a nuclear blast or eaten by a giant bug.

Here's what you can get your endangered paws on:

Win this original Giffen art!

Grand Prize (One winner)

The original art for the cover of *Mars Attacks* #1!

Second Prize (One winner)

Keith Giffen's original 22-page panel-by-panel visual breakdown for *Mars Attacks* #2!

Third Prize (10 winners)

A set of *Mars Attacks* #1-#5 signed by Keith Giffen, Len Brown, and Charles Adlard!

Fourth Prize (15 winners)

A copy of *Mars Attacks* #1 signed by Keith Giffen, Len Brown, and Charles Adlard!

Fifth Prize (25 winners)

A complete set of the rerelease of the Topps Mars Attacks trading card set!

SO...HOW CAN YOU WIN ALL THAT COOL STUFF? SIMPLE. ALL YOU GOTTA DO IS ANSWER THE THREE MARS ATTACKS TRIVIA QUESTIONS—SEE *MARS ATTACKS* #1, ON SALE IN MAY, FOR THE ANSWERS—SCRIBBLE THE ANSWERS DOWN ON THE OFFICIAL MARS ATTACKS ENTRY FORM, AND MAIL THE WHOLE THING OFF TO:

Questions:

1. In what country does *Mars Attacks* #1 begin?

2. What species of giant insect shows up at the end of *Mars Attacks* #1?

3. Where are the Martians hanging out while they do their dirty deeds?

Mars Attacks Contest
c/o Wizard Press
151 Wells Ave.
Congers, NY 10920-2064

Hurry up! The Earth explodes and this contest ends on June 10, 1994!

ENTRIES DUE BY JUNE 10, 1994!

CONTEST

Mars Attacks

I GAME:

NAME (PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY) AGE

HOME ADDRESS

CITY STATE ZIP

PHONE (DON'T FORGET YOUR AREA CODE)

NAME OF STORE WHERE YOU BUY YOUR COMICS

STORE ADDRESS

CITY STATE ZIP

PHONE (DON'T FORGET THE AREA CODE)

Answer to question #1: _____

Answer to question #2: _____

Answer to question #3: _____

The Fine Print

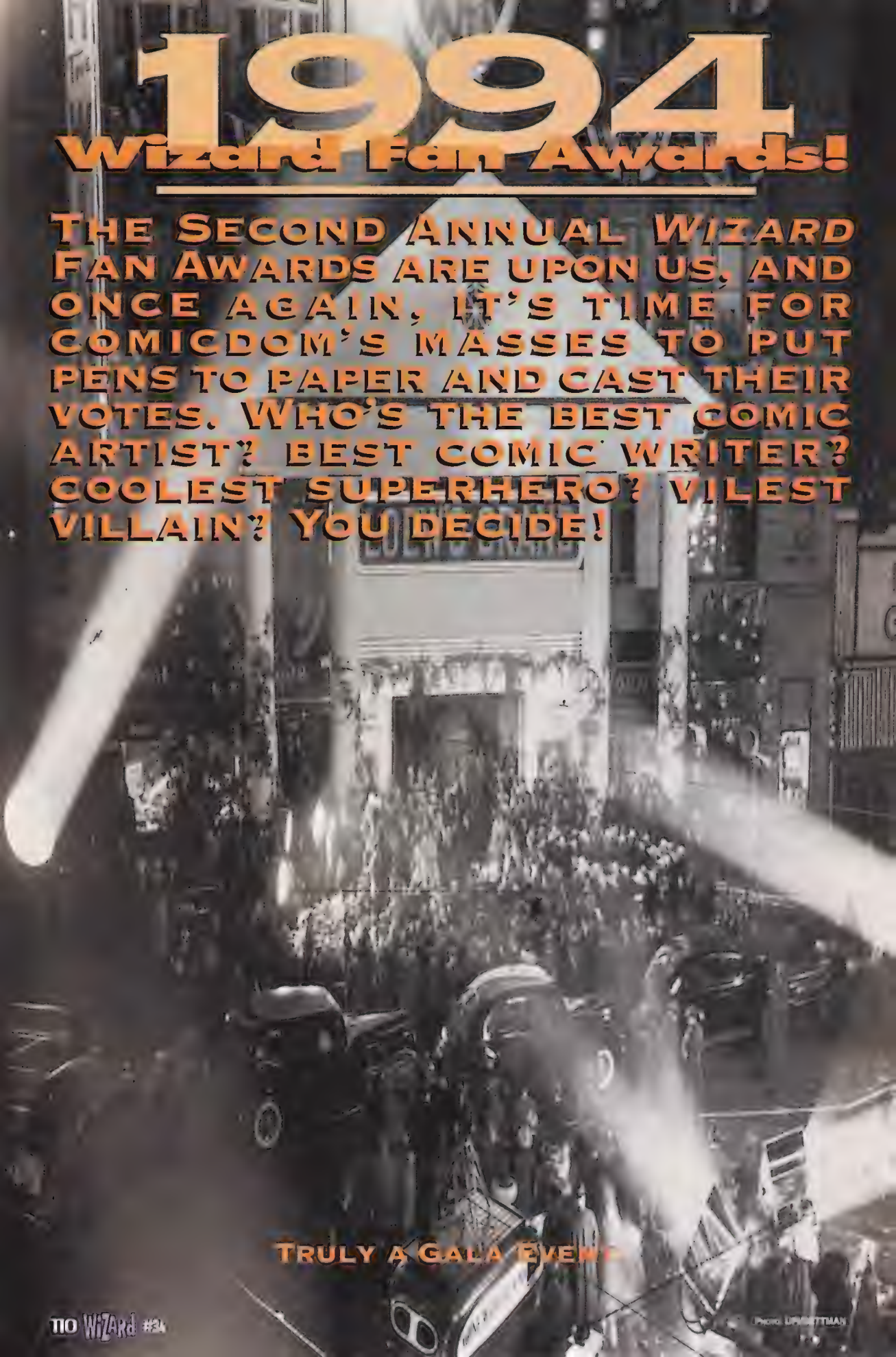
No purchase necessary. Contest is open to anyone except employees of Wizard Press and Topps Comics, their immediate families, and those foul-tempered Martian jerks. Print your name, address, city, state, zip code, telephone number with area code, the name and address of the store where you purchase comics, and the Mars Attacks trivia answers on the Official Mars Attacks Entry Form or a three-by-five-inch index card. Enter as many times as you like. Mail each entry to Mars Attacks Contest, c/o Wizard Press, 151 Wells Ave., Congers, NY 10920-2064. No mechanical reproductions will be accepted. All entries become the property of Wizard Press, and none will be returned. All taxes (federal, state, and local, if any) will be the responsibility of the prize winners. No cash equivalent or substitute prizes are offered. The prizes will be awarded in the names of the contest winners and are not transferable. Only one prize per household. Offer void where prohibited, regulated, or restricted by law in a manner inconsistent with the purpose and rules hereof. **All entries must be received at contest headquarters by June 10, 1994.** Wizard Press is not responsible for lost, late, misdirected, or mutilated entries. Odds of winning will be determined by the number of valid entries received prior to the closing date of the contest. The prize winners will be selected in a random drawing from all properly completed entry forms received at contest headquarters. The random drawing will be conducted on June 13, 1994, by Wizard Press.

For a list of winners, available after June 30, 1994, send a stamped, self-addressed envelope to Mars Attacks Winners, c/o Wizard Press, 151 Wells Ave., Congers, NY 10920-2064, or just look in future issues of *Wizard*!

ALL MARS ATTACKS ART ™ & © TOPPS COMICS INC.

1994 Wizard Fan Awards!

The Second Annual *Wizard* Fan Awards are upon us, and once again, it's time for comicdom's masses to put pens to paper and cast their votes. Who's the best comic artist? best comic writer? coolest superhero? vilest villain? You decide!



Truly a Gala Event

Photo: UPWRITTMAN

Entry Rules:

- The only comic issues eligible for the 1994 *Wizard* Fan Awards are those published between September 2, 1993, and September 1, 1994. Story arcs, ongoing titles, mini-series, trading card lines, toy lines, and TV programs which debuted before September 2, 1993, or after September 1, 1994, are eligible if at least one of its comics, cards, toys, or episodes appeared between those dates.

- Print one and only one favorite in each category. If more than one favorite is listed in a single category, none of them will be counted.

- All ballots must be received at Wizard Press by September 9, 1994. Ballots received after the deadline will not be counted.

- Print clearly. Use a separate sheet of paper if necessary. Just make sure everything is legible so your votes can be counted.

- Fill out the official *Wizard* Fan Awards ballot and mail it to:

Wizard Fan Awards '94
c/o Wizard Press
151 Wells Ave.
Congers, NY 10920-2064

Do you wanna know the winners? So do we.
A list of the top vote-getters in each category will be printed in *Wizard* #39, and a list of winners will appear in *Wizard* #40.

Official Wizard Fan Awards Ballot

Wizard Fan Awards '94

Creators:

Favorite Penciler _____
Favorite Inker _____
Favorite Colorist _____
Favorite Painter _____
Favorite Cover Artist _____
Favorite Letterer _____
Favorite Writer _____
Favorite Editor _____

Characters:

Favorite Hero _____
Favorite Heroine _____
Favorite Villain _____
Favorite Villainess _____
Favorite Supporting Character (Male) _____
Favorite Supporting Character (Female) _____
Most Improved Character (Male) _____
Most Improved Character (Female) _____

Products:

Favorite Story _____
Favorite Story Arc (two or more issues) _____
Favorite Ongoing Title _____
Most Improved Ongoing Title _____
Favorite One-Shot/Specialty Book _____
Favorite Mini-Series _____
Favorite Cover _____
Favorite Publisher _____
Favorite Trading Card Series (non-sports) _____
Favorite Toy Line (industry-related) _____
Favorite TV Program (industry-related) _____

I am:

Name: _____
Street: _____
City: _____
State: _____ Zip: _____

Send your ballot to:
***Wizard* Fan Awards '94**
c/o Wizard Press
151 Wells Ave.
Congers, NY 10920-2064

BALLOTS DUE BY SEPT. 9, 1994!

the WIZARD OF CARDS

By Stephen Shamus

SkyBox will release a DC Master Series in June. This set, the first of its kind for the DC Universe, will be similar to Marvel Masterpieces, meaning it'll boast fully painted images, high-quality production, and a limited print run. The set's artists include

DC Meets the Masters

Nelson, Julie Bell, and John Bolton. Only 10,000 individually numbered 20-box cases are being produced, and the boxes will be numbered from 1 to 200,000. Packs will contain eight cards and have a suggested retail price of $1.49 each.

This 90-card set is broken down into character subsets which focus on Superman's allies and opponents, Batman's allies and opponents, et cetera. Chase cards include foil cards of Wonder Woman, Aquaman, Green Arrow, and Hawkman randomly inserted at the rate of two cards per box.

Five double-sided Spectra-Etch cards are also randomly inserted, the first-ever cards to feature Spectra-Etch on both sides. Each card will feature a hero on one side and his nemesis on the other, except for Bill Sienkiewicz's, which will have Lobo on both sides. Joe DeVito is doing Kyle Rayner/Evil Hal Jordan; Tom Fleming is doing Superman/Doomsday; Brian Stelfreeze, Flash/Reverse-Flash; and Simon Bisley, Batman/Joker. These double-sided cards come only one to a box, so they should be in high demand.

Superman is featured in this set's SkyDisc. When the SkyDisc is placed on a table under strong light, the Man of Steel appears as a 3-D figure standing inside the disc. This goodie comes only once every 10 boxes, which should make it just as sought after as the Batman SkyDisc from the Batman: Saga of the Dark Knight card set.

SkyBox also has a Youngblood trading card set on tap. Besides a tentative late-summer release date, little else is known about these cards. We'll keep you posted.

In mid-May, Pyramid/Upper Deck will release a Valiant set including a few real-life people. This new 120-card collection, entitled The Valiant Files: Secrets from the Harbinger Foundation, has Reggie Jackson, Joe Montana, Ken Griffey Jr., and Michael Jordan cards—it turns out they're Secret Harbingers. The display boxes are plastic cases shaped like filing cabinets, each drawer containing hanging file folders which in turn contain the packs, giving the impression that the cards are actually part of someone's secret files.

Every pack will include one of 36 three-and-a-half-by-five-inch fold-out cards, which are numbered as part of the set. The series also includes a 30-card Harbinger Recon subset, a 21-card News Clippings subset, and a 28-card Harada's Assessments subset.

The chase cards include nine Eggbreaker foil cards, which when placed together form a larger image; seven Harada's Archives cards, which are foil cards commemorating milestone events; and two Limited Edition (LE) cards featuring Sting battling Harada. Both LE cards are four-level color holograms. There are eight cards to a pack, with a suggested retail price of 99 cents per pack.

There's new info on Topps's Mars Attacks series, which was mentioned last issue. The new series will be shot from the original film, so it should look pretty crisp. We also have a list of artists who are working on the 35 all-new cards: Simon Bisley, Mike Mignola, Mark Schultz, Ken Steacy, Dave Dorman, Frank Brunner, Keith Giffen, Tim Truman, Charles Vess, and more will be included. Inside sources indicate that one of the "and more" may be Frank Frazetta, who's been contacted about working on the set.

SkyBox has three different science fiction sets scheduled to ship soon. The Star Trek: The Next Generation Episodes set we mentioned last issue has been pushed back to May to coincide with the season-ending episode on May 20. That will be the show's last episode ever,although, the *ST:TNG* characters will make their movie debut in November '94. SkyBox holds the card rights to the film and will produce a set at that time. Price and method of distribution have yet to be determined for either set.

From l. to r.: Four DC Master Series cards, a Batman: SODK card and, a Mars Attacks card.

™ & © DC Comics

"Running this fast sure does make my face contort in weird ways!"

™ & © DC Comics

Captain Atom lets off some gas, er...*steam.*

™ & © DC Comics

How does AzBats inspire fear in men's hearts while wearing Andy Gibb model superhero pants?!

At the end of May, look for a 100-card set based on *seaQuest DSV*, the popular science-fiction TV series. Subsets include a 70-card first season subset, a character subset, and a design subset. Look for summaries of each episode on the backs of the first season subset cards and schematics of the show's gadgets on the backs of the design subset cards. Packs will contain eight cards and carry a suggested retail price of $1.29 each. Four foil-enhanced bonus cards will be randomly inserted.

Star Trek Master Series 2 is also due out from SkyBox. This set, scheduled for a July release, follows up on 1993's popular first series. It features all-new paintings by Boris Vallejo, Joe Jusko, and Julie Bell. We'll have more details shortly.

In May, Fleer will release a 150-card Beavis and Butt-Head set featuring animation cels, pictures from their book, *This Book Sucks*, and original art. Packs will contain 10 cards and bear a suggested retail price of $1.79 each. The chase cards include 10 scratch 'n' sniff cards featuring the smells of body odor, smoke, and bad food.

Jim Lee's Wildstorm Productions is working on its first trading card series, Wildstorm Set 1, due out in June. Each of the set's 100 cards, all of them chromium, will feature original art by Lee, Marc Silvestri, and a gaggle of other artists. The subsets will focus on WildC.A.T.s, StormWatch, Gen[13], Union, WetWorks, and Deathblow.

Nine chase cards are planned for the set, all of them refractive foil chromium cards. J. Scott Campbell will do a Gen[13] card, Travis Charest a StormWatch card, and Lee a WildC.A.T.s card; the others haven't been set yet. There will also be an as-yet unspecified number of cards autographed by various creators. Each pack will contain six cards, although the suggested retail price was not set at press time.

The Wildstorm cards will be more than just collectibles—they'll also function as playing pieces in a card combat game. Each box will contain instructions on how to play.

MArket WATCH

SkyBox has sold out of three products which are now performing very well on the secondary market. The Simpsons card set, a huge hit, was obviously underordered. It instantly sold out in many stores, thanks to all the goodies in the packs. The acetate cards are dynamite, the only problem being that if you don't have all three, they make no sense. The wiggle cards are great, especially the pop-drinking, belching Barney card.

The recently released Batman: Saga of the Dark Knight cards have been selling very well. The limited nature of the product, combined with the fact that it's the first comic Batman set since the '60s, has helped make this series successful.

SkyBox's other recent hit, Ultraverse 2: Origins, has sold through quite well, due in large part to its limited production of 3,975 cases. The cards are far better than those of the first series, which did not go over too well. At the time of the first set's publication, Ultraverse had not established either a reputation or a fan base. Now that both of those are in place, the Origins cards are selling well.

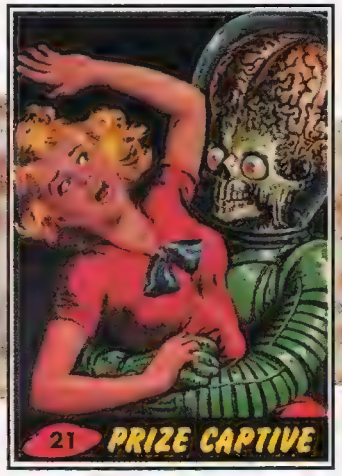
Fleer Ultra X-Men is still huge, with no decline in sight. All the chase sets are in high demand, mostly due to the fact that they were relatively easy to obtain. That made most collectors want to collect all the cards, and their efforts to assemble complete sets continue to help pack sales.

ANDROMACHE ™ & © WILDSTORM PRODUCTIONS DBA AEGIS ENTERTAINMENT

™ & © DC COMICS

"I can block bullets with my bracelets or my hair—I use Aqua Net hairspray."

™ & © TOPPS



"I am from the planet Cerebellum and I will snatch you away from Earth!"

™ & © DC COMICS

"Hey Bats, I never knew Superman was Burt Reynolds. He's really taking that divorce from Loni pretty hard."

TOP 10 HEROES & VILLAINS OF THE MONTH

This list doesn't track the number of copies which a specific character sells each month. It doesn't pay any attention to any kind of sales meter. This list is a roster of the 10 comic book characters with the strongest fan following—nothing more, nothing less.

1. SPAWN

It seems that our friend Toddy wants to keep Spawn at the top of the charts for a long, long time. Not content with having the best-selling comic in the land, Mr. McFarlane paired his creation with another one of comicdom's coolest characters, Batman, and set comic shelves nationwide on fire. After word of the team-up became public, Todd announced a line of Spawn toys which will debut in the fall. Spawn will also have a mini-series later this year involving Angela, the villainess introduced by Neil Gaiman in issue #9. That Spawn—he's a popular guy.

2. SPIDER-MAN

Spidey, still holding the No. 2 spot, looks as though he's gearing up to drop-kick Spawn right out of the No. 1 slot. How, you ask? Merchandising, merchandising, merchandising! Yup, as if four regular monthly titles, a futuristic monthly title, a giant-size quarterly title, and countless annuals, specials, and limited series weren't enough, Spidey is ready to swing onto the small screen with an all-new cartoon, into toy stores with a massive line of new action figures, and possibly onto the big screen with a major flick by James Cameron. Spider-Man is nearing a popularity boiling point.

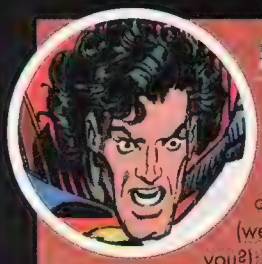
3. BATMAN

Whether it's Bruce Wayne (who we prefer) or Jean Paul Valley (who we hope goes back to being Azrael) wearing the Batsuit, comic fans just can't seem to get enough of *él Batman*. This summer, Batman will be getting his fair share of attention, thanks to his intercompany crossover with another dark and gritty character, the Punisher. Also in the works for Batman: the resolution to the storyline that started last spring with "Knightfall." "KnightsEnd" should provide the answer to the months-old question, "Who will possess the mantle of the Bat?"

4. WOLVERINE

"It's cold! I want my blankey!" Ah shuddup, you big baby. Geez, yank out someone's skeletal structure and they turn into one big crybaby. Adamantium-laced bones or not, Wolvie is still one popular li'l tyke. Logan, who's known for his almost unstoppable fury, is taking it fairly easy these days, which has translated into some of the better stories to appear in his title. Even though some fans might be peeved that Wolvie lost all his metal implants, he's more like he was back in the early days of the "New" X-Men, and not quite the unstoppable Terminator he became in more recent years.

SPAWN IS A REGISTERED TRADEMARK OF TODD MCFARLANE. SPAWN © & © TODD MCFARLANE. SPIDER-MAN AND WOLVERINE ™ & © MARVEL ENTERTAINMENT GROUP. BATMAN ™ & © DC COMICS.



5. SUPERMAN

Our pal Kal-El has been quite busy lately, aside from his frequent visits to the hairdresser to maintain his coif. Bizarro's made a reappearance (we really felt sorry for the guy, didn't you?); Luthor (the clone of the original villain) is on a rampage, resulting in mucho carnage in the greater Metropolis area; and Superman himself is having problems keeping his powers—and size—under control. All of this activity has kept Clark Kent on the streets and in trouble over the past few months, and there's no sign of a break in his schedule.

6. SABRETOOTH

What a hairy guy. Ten bucks says he smells worse than the bathroom at a Mexican restaurant. Sheesh! On top of his...unique odor, Sabretooth is also one of the most unpleasant people ever to have joined (well, sorta joined) the X-Men. Not only has he almost killed several team members in the past (like when he ripped out Wolverine's throat with his bare hands), he's psychotic. So he can't control himself and he endangers those around him. What does all this make him—villainous? Nutty? Nope—popular. Here he is at No. 6.

7. GAMBIT

The Cajun lover boy still holds a soft spot in your hearts, thanks to his exposure in the pages of *X-Men*, on Saturday morning TV, and on toy shelves throughout our fine land. Remy LeBeau (Gambit's actual birth name) can touch anything, charge said object with kinetic energy, and cause it to explode! This is a very cool power, to be sure, but if we were him, we'd be extremely careful when attending the little boy's room.

8. ROBIN

Everyone who thought that the Boy Wonder couldn't carry a monthly title after the last two dreadful mini-series (holograms and lenticular covers for everyone!) was barking up the wrong tree. This series, thanks to terrific writing by Chuck Dixon and great artwork by Tom Grummett and Ray Kryssing, has been a very solid favorite since issue #1. Since this summer's Batstory will bring Robin into the mix, the Boy Wonder figures to be a prominent character for some time to come (although he seems somewhat surprised to hear it).

9. X-O MANOWAR

Hey, who pulled the old lipstick-on-the-binoculars trick on Aric? Not a smart move—Aric (X-O) ain't known for having a good temper. But anyway, Aric may be one real popular character, but he's in a spot of trouble these days. Y'see, X-O's old foes, the Spider Aliens (y'know, the very overused but still very cool buggy guys), poisoned the X-O armor and nailed it with some high-tech blaster thingies, and now the armor's kaput. Where does this leave the mighty Aric? Rumor has it he'll be getting a new set of threads courtesy of his bud Solar.

10. PRIME

Hey, his chin is bigger than his head—he's like a human pelican! It must look pretty grotesque when he smiles. But beauty is only skin deep, and for Prime, "skin deep" is a relative thing. Y'see, Prime is actually 13-year-old Kevin Green, who grows protoplasmic superpowered bodies like Prime, Space Prime, Rogue Prime, Past-His-Prime...well, you get the idea. This premise made Prime appealing to the younger readers, and he quickly became the hottest star in the very excellent Malibu Ultraverse.

MORT OF THE MONTH

Now it's time to look at the lamest character of the month, or, as we like to call 'em, the Mort of the Month!

RED BEE

No, ladies and gentlemen, it's not the Yellowjacket, it's (drum roll, please)...the Red Bee! This bag of garbage was actually an assistant DA turned crime fighter who used to sic his trained bees (which he kept in his belt buckle) on his opponents. It's a good thing he did, because this guy stood five foot nine and weighed in at a robust 147 pounds. He'd be lucky to beat an egg at that size! After his stint as crime fighter ended in the early '40s, the Red Bee vanished from the public eye, which was probably a good move on his part, since criminals have gotten tougher and meaner as the years went by. Do you think any crook today would bee afraid of this idiot?

Sabretooth and Gambit ™ & © Marvel Entertainment Group. Superman, Robin, and the Red Bee ™ & © DC Comics. X-O Manowar ™ & © Voyager Communications Inc. Prime ™ & © Malibu Comics Entertainment Group Inc.

© Marvel Entertainment Group

Uncanny X-Men #221

Artists: ***Marc Silvestri and Dan Green***
Writer: ***Chris Claremont***
Publisher: ***Marvel Comics***
Release Date: ***September 1987***

Hey, hot damn, and here we thought we'd used up all the good X-Men Comic Watch books months ago.

So, aside from this really crappy cover, what makes this book stand out? Why, it's the first appearance of the X-villain who's so nasty, so vile, and so vicious that even his name is mean-spirited: Mr. Sinister. (Strikes terror in yer heart, don't it?)

In this ish, we get to see Sinister at his best: growling, snarling, assaulting his cronies (the Marauders—you remember them), the whole nine yards. And hey, if the fact that this is Mr. Sinister's first appearance doesn't drive you into a frenzy (which it should: he has an action figure, you know), that pesky Sabretooth (who's got four toy figures!) makes a major appearance in this book as well.

All in all, *Uncanny X-Men* #221 is quite the back issue buy for those looking for a diamond in the rough.

Value then: $4.50
Value now: $6.50

© Marvel

One year ago this month, the *Wizard* Comic Watch spotlighted *Iron Man* #121, the first full-story appearance of James Rhodes.

COMIC watch

© Marvel Entertainment Group

Amazing Spider-Man #194

Artists: ***Keith Pollard and Frank Giacoia***
Writer: ***Marv Wolfman***
Publisher: ***Marvel Comics***
Release Date: ***July 1979***

Hey, what's with all the little yellow stuff flyin' 'round Spidey's head? You'd think his spider-sense would warn him or something.

Anyway, if you couldn't figure it out from the catchy blurb on the cover, this ish of *Amazing Spider-Man* features the first appearance of that platinum blonde bombshell, the Black Cat. Long before she had her love affairs with Spidey and Flash Thompson, li'l Felicia Hardy here was making a name for herself by being a royal pain in Spidey's butt.

Seeing as how she's become an integral part of Spider-Man's supporting cast and is now the star of her own four-issue mini-series, this is one slow-burnin' back issue. Add that to the fact that this issue has a black cover, which is difficult to find with the cover image centered and without wrinkles or nicks in the spine, and boom, you have a winner. ☆

Value then: $13.00
Value now: $43.50

© DC Comics

One year ago this month, the *Wizard* Comic Watch spotlighted *Sandman* (vol. 2) #8, the first appearance of Death.

IF YOU ARE TIRED OF DEATH *THIS* AND BLOOD *THAT*...

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PICKS
FROM THE WIZARD'S HAT

HERE'S A LIST OF THE HOTTEST BOOKS SHIPPING IN MAY!

Violator #1

Artists: Bart Sears & Mark Pennington
Writer: Alan Moore
Release Date: May
Cover Price: $1.95

Since his debut in the pages of *Spawn* #2, the Violator has established himself as Image's premier *hombre que no es muy simpático* (meaning "guy who's not very nice"). In May, the morphing little devil's helper gets his own three-part mini-series courtesy of two of the best in the business: Alan "Hey guys, remember me?" Moore and Bart "I like muscles" Sears.

This sordid tale begins with the Violator being stripped of his powers by the Malebolgia—aka the Devil, Beelzebub, Lucifer, He-Who-Backwashes, et cetera—for some apparent misdeed. (One wonders what "misdeed" means to the Devil.) The Malebolgia then sends three Phlebiac Brothers to Earth in order to beat the phlegm out of their little bro.

Alan Moore scripts the shenanigans of the Violator, trapped on Earth in his fat clown form, as he attempts to regain his demonic powers. Visuals of the Violator's quest come courtesy of the dynamic pencils of fan favorite Sears. (The third and final installment of the mini-series will be penciled by Greg Capullo, who's pitching in to help Bart avoid the dreaded deadline demon.) Mark Pennington supplies the inks.

Will the grotesque little madman survive his trial by fire and once again become the slobbering, fly-eyed, three-horned, crooked-toothed (and he's got lots of crooked teeth!), big-mouth-bragging, heart-extracting psychopath whom comic fans worldwide have warmed up to and welcomed into their hearts? With Moore writing, who knows?

All characters depicted are registered trademarks of Todd McFarlane Productions

Starwatchers #1

Starwatchers ™ & © Voyager Communications Inc.

Artists: Mike Leeke & Dick Giordano
Writer: Tony Bedard
Release Date: May
Cover Price: $3.50

The Starwatchers, an immortal race of beings with fantastic superpowers, are direct descendants of the H.A.R.D. Corps. They also have the now-famous (and slightly overused) nanites in their blood.

After pulling the Future Force's fannies from the fire at the end of the Malev War (in *Magnus Robot Fighter* #37 and *Rai and the Future Force* #22), the Starwatchers now want to take control of Earth to make sure it stays a safe haven for life. You see, the 'Watchers have this credo: they refuse to destroy life in any way, shape, or form, which must make stepping on an insect a particularly gut-wrenching experience for them. Magnus cuts a deal with the 'Watchers: they can place one 'Watcher on Earth if they allow one Earthling aboard their station.

Starwatchers should be a pretty special book. Not only will it be inked by legend (no, not those Dark Horse guys) Dick Giordano, but *Starwatchers* will be zipping your way every month in full Valiant Vision color! This particular issue features both Valiant Vision interiors and a chromium Valiant Vision cover. Those of you who don't own VV glasses needn't fret, as the fine folks at "The Big V" will release another special VV Starter Kit in May.

Batman #509

Artists: Mike Manley & Dick Giordano
Writer: Doug Moench
Release Date: late May
Cover Price: $2.50

Events in the Batverse (our own little contraction for "Batman Universe"; we think it's kinda neat) are plowing ahead full steam. The latest storyline should rock the Batverse to its very core.

Batman #509 is set right after *Robin* #7. This 48-page book is the first chapter in the "KnightsEnd" story, which will reveal the identity of the new Batman. We're not exactly sure who that'll be, but the list of possible Dark Knight Detectives includes Bruce Wayne, Jean Paul Valley (you know, Batnut), Robin, Nightwing, and Catwoman (hey, she'd fill a Batsuit pretty nicely).

In this story, Bruce Wayne, still recovering from his debilitating injuries, must retrain himself. Bruce enlists the aid of one-time Batfoe Lady Shiva and does whatever it takes to get himself back on his feet and back into the cape and cowl. In the meantime, Jean Paul is being negatively influenced by the System (that mind stuff that's hard to explain; we'll just say it's bad), and it looks like he may need to trade in his Batsuit for a nice new white jacket—the kind that laces up in back.

The Batfun continues this month in *Batman: Shadow of the Bat* #29.

All characters depicted ™ & © DC Comics

Force Works #1

All characters depicted ™ & © Marvel Entertainment Group

Artists: Tom Tenney & Rey Garcia
Writers: Dan Abnett & Andy Lanning
Release Date: early May
Cover Price: $3.95

Marvel is getting ready to turn it up a notch with this title. The Force Works team was formed from the asses...whoops, *ashes* of the Avengers West Coast. As you recall, the AWC was disbanded after the group's big to-do with Captain America in the last issue of the Wackos' title. ("Wackos?," you ask. "Wackos," we answer. "That's our nickname for the West Coast Avengers, 'cos any team with U.S.Agent in it is pretty wacko.")

Editor Nel Yomtov says, "I assure you that a major event in the Marvel Universe will be happening in this issue. This is no fooling around, no jive, no monkey business." Yomtov promises that the series won't slow down, either: action will be a key ingredient in this title.

Force Works will be a title up with which fans of both *War Machine* and *Iron Man* will want to keep. According to Yomtov, "The book will play an integral part within the three titles. It will be a family type of continuity that the fans will really enjoy."

The cover enhancement sounds pretty keen as well. It's a multilayer pop-up cover printed on nice card stock. Neat!

Worlds Collide #1

Artists: Various
Writer: Robert L. Washington III
Release Date: early June
Cover Price: $2.50 (Newsstand Ed.)
$3.95 (Collector's Ed.)

There's so much cool stuff in this book that DC and Milestone needed 48 pages to contain it! *Worlds Collide* #1 features two stories, each starring Rift, an awesome new supervillain who will, Milestone's Dwayne McDuffie says, "have major ties to both the Milestone and Superman universes."

In the first story, Static, Superboy, and Rocket fight a horde of Rift's dastardly creations, while the second story depicts a donnybrook between the Blood Syndicate and Superman, and the destruction of both Paris Island and Metropolis. (Hey, that's two times that Metropolis has been wasted in two months. Cool!)

This book kicks off the Milestone and DC "Worlds Collide" crossover. McDuffie says *Worlds Collide* #1 is "the pivotal book in the 'Worlds Collide' crossover, and the creators on both the Milestone end and the Superman end are doing some of the best work of their lives... Everyone's having a blast working on it."

The collector's edition of this book will ship with cool "vinyl clings" (like those which came with *Superman: The Man of Steel* #30) of major players from both universes. If you're not one of those sissies who refuse to open up their books, you can create your own cover adventure!

Superman ™ & © DC Comics. Icon ™ & © Milestone Media Inc.

MORE PICKS

The following pages compile the grooviest titles shipping in the month of May. Also listed are books carrying the *Wizard* recommended reading RSA sign—comics that have the most promise to deliver a solid, well-written story, and ones that shouldn't be overlooked on the comic book rack.

Action Comics #701

DC COMICS "The Fall of Metropolis," Part 5 (of 5). Luthor takes one last stab at leveling Metropolis and Superman by unleashing the deadly Kryptonian battle suit! (Gimme a break. That thing was never anything more than a Fortress of Solitude ornament. Deadly, indeed.) By Karl Kesel, Jackson Guice, and Denis Rodier. **$1.50**

The Adventures of Cyclops & Phoenix #3 (of 4)

MARVEL The techno-organic disease that plagues young Nathan Christopher comes back full force. Is hope for the future fading fast? (Well, according to nine out of 10 science fiction writers, yeah, it is.) By Scott Lobdell, Gene Ha, and Al "Oy" Vey. **$2.95**

Amazing Spider-Man #391

MARVEL Shriek (from last year's decade-spanning "Maximum Carnage" storyline) returns, with Carrion not far behind. As Spidey tracks them down, will Aunt May finally bite it in the wake of the death of Peter's parents? (Y'know, Aunt May has been critically ill since...oh, about 1962. You'd think old age would've kicked in by now, huh?) By J.M. DeMatteis, Mark Bagley, and Randy Emberlin. **$1.50**

Black Cat #1 (of 4)

MARVEL The Black Cat's got her own mini-series, and in the first issue, a mysterious corporation hires her to recover stolen plans. To do so, she must face Cardiac and a whole gaggle of villains. By Terry Kavanagh, Andrew Wildman, and Stephen Baskerville. **$1.50**

Blood Syndicate #16

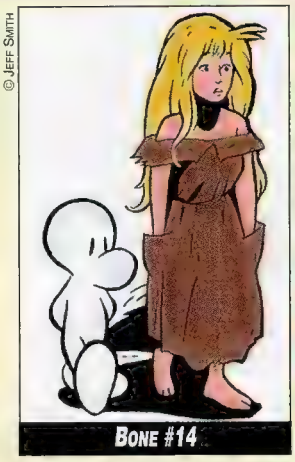
MILESTONE MEDIA/DC "Worlds Collide," Part 6 (of 14). OHMIGOD!!! The worlds have merged! THE WORLDS HAVE MERGED!!! I see stars! So many stars...so many... Uh, anyway, now that it's happened, the Blood Syndicate decides to run amok in Metropolis, and the Man of Steel is none too happy about it. By Ivan Velez Jr., Chriscross, and Rober Quijano. **$1.50**

© Marvel

Cyclops and Phoenix #3

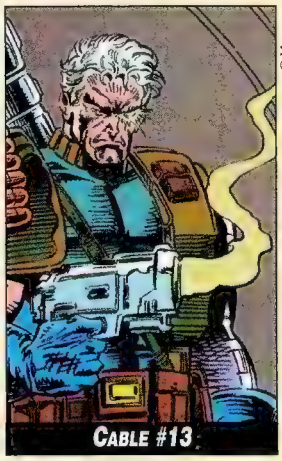
© Marvel

Black Cat #1



© Jeff Smith

Bone #14



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Cable #13

RSA Bone #14

CARTOON BOOKS Fone Bone learns the rigors of farm life, and Lucius takes Phoney and Smiley back to his tavern to work off their astronomical debts—but getting there is half the battle! (And so is knowing, for that matter. Yo, Joe!) Written and drawn by Jeff Smith, who says of the issue, "It's basically the trip that Phoney and Smiley take back to the tavern, and they get to know Lucius—who, up to this point, has been an ogre/father figure—better. Quite a bit happens on the road—there's a Rat Creature attack..." **$2.95**

Cable #13

MARVEL Wanna know what scares Cable? Well, this issue shows you in full-color splendor as he and Lee Forrester encounter D'Spayre. By Glenn Herdling and some artist person whom Marvel hasn't identified yet. **$2.00**

RSA Catwoman #12

DC COMICS "KnightsEnd," Part 6 (of 10). Catwoman and Batman converge on a mysterious arms dealer, and when his identity is revealed...why is it that everyone knows him from somewhere? Plus, is Bruce Wayne ready to put on the cape and cowl? Find out in this issue! The story is by Jo Duffy and adapted by Chuck Dixon, with art by Jim Balent and Andé Parks. Duffy says, "This is where Bruce Wayne finally comes to terms with whether or not he's up for the job, and where Azrael comes unwrapped, and where Catwoman comes right into the middle of it." **$1.50**

Cyberforce #5

IMAGE Troubles abound as Ballistic raises a ruckus with Cyberdata and all of its affiliates. Cyberforce, in the meantime, is ill at ease, because she may be going too far. By Marc and Eric Silvestri, each of whom thinks Mom likes him best. **$1.95**

RSA Danger Unlimited #4 (of 4)

LEGEND/DARK HORSE In this issue, two Danger Unlimited

UNCANNY X-MEN #1
MILESTONE EDITION

Signed by Jack Kirby.
This comic is a reproduction of Uncanny X-Men #1, the very first appearance of the X-Men (and Magneto!) from 1963. Much of the original 2000 copy signed run has already sold, so our supplies on this item are extremely limited. $350 ea.

X-MEN #30
Signed by Andy Kubert and Matt Ryan. Limited to 7500 copies. $40 ea.

X-FACTOR #100
Signed by Jan Duursema. Limited to 10,000 copies. $25 ea.

MARVELS #1 - #4
Signed by Alex Ross & Kurt Busiek. Limited to only 1000 sets. $125 per set.

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Signed by Mark Texiera. Limited to 10,000 copies. $25 ea.

CABLE #1
Signed by Art Thibert. Limited to 10,000 copies. $25 ea.

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MORE PICKS

teams form! Doc Danger, Miss Mirage, Thermal, and Hunk join forces in 1960, and Thermal, Belabet, and Caucus team up in 2060 to defeat the alien Xlerii. But what lurks in the subbasement of the hospital where Thermal was being held...? (We know! An incomplete copy of *WetWorks* #1.) And how many secrets does the past hold for Cal Carson? These are the questions posed by John Byrne, working with colorist Matt Webb. Also, the origin of the Torch of Liberty concludes, courtesy of Byrne and Kieron Dwyer. **$2.00**

Detective Comics #676

DC COMICS "KnightsEnd," Part 3 (of 10). Nightwing and Robin continue to follow Batman as he hunts an arms dealer he believes is connected to the Order of St. Dumas. In the meantime, Bruce Wayne continues to retrain himself (maybe that "Stop the Insanity" chick could help). By Chuck Dixon, Graham Nolan, and Scott Hanna. This continues in *Batman: Legends of the Dark Knight* #62, in which Lady Shiva's ploy to make Bruce Wayne a killer succeeds! **$2.50**

Green Lantern #53

DC COMICS As if fighting Mongul toe to toe once wasn't bad enough, the new Green Lantern gets another chance to totally screw things up. Good thing for him he has Superman on his side this time. By Ron Marz, Darryl Banks, and Romeo Tanghal. **$1.50**

Hardware #17

MILESTONE MEDIA/DC "Worlds Collide," Part 2 (of 14). Fred Bentson, still tortured by strange dreams, seeks out the help of a private lab. Unfortunately, the lab turns out to be owned by Edwin Alva, who now wants to bridge the Milestone and DC dimensions! Wanna take a big guess as to what Hardware's gonna try and do? (So...do the Milestone characters live on Earth-A, Earth-X, Ear...Ea...it's *Crisis* all over again! *Aaagh!!!*) By Dwayne McDuffie, Denys Cowan, and Prentis Rollins. **$1.50**

Incredible Hulk #419

MARVEL Talos the Tamed (what a wimpy name for a Skrull) has a death wish, and in order to make it come true, he picks a fight with...the Hulk! Good choice. Written by Peter David, and drawn by Roger Cruz and Cam Smith. **$1.50**

© Topps

Mars Attacks #1

© Rob Liefeld

Prophet #7

Magnus Robot Fighter #39

VALIANT In this book, set 17 years after the Malev War (what a wimpy way to undo that lame Malev War thing), we learn that Magnus is president of Earth. We're also introduced to Magnus's son, Torque, the superstrong swashbuckler. This leads to *Rai* #24, in which Takashi, the son of the 41st Rai, reveals a hatred for the new young Rai. (That sounds like a tasty foreign dish: Soup of New Young Rai. Mmmm...) By Antony J.L. Bedard, Jim Calafiore, and Gonzalo Mayo. **$2.25**

Mars Attacks #1 (of 5)

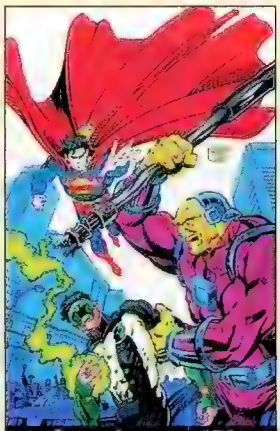
TOPPS COMICS In the main story, by Keith Giffen and Charles Adlard, the Martians invade Earth! Witness the complete and utter dismantling and destruction of Earth's key cities, its armies, and its nuclear warheads. As if that wasn't bad enough, the Martians unleash a biological agent which causes insects to grow larger. (Uh, excuse me—I would think destroying nuclear warheads was enough.) In the second tale, Len Brown and Giffen reveal why the Martians attacked in the first place. (Probably has something to do with Earth's plans to open a DisneyMars.) **$2.95**

Prime #12/Ultraverse Premiere #3

MALIBU Rogue Prime tussles with the Strongest Man in the World, Hector "Planet Class" Ortiz, and gets a rematch with Kutt, to boot. And does Kelly's mom have the hots for Prime? By Gerard Jones, Len Strazewski, and Norm Breyfogle. Jones says of the issue, "Basically, Prime is going through his major adolescent rebellion. He's kind of on a rampage to prove to the world that he's his own man." In *Premiere*: Part 3 of "Elven," Warstrike vs. Prime, and Ripfire by Darick Robertson. **$3.50**

Prophet #7

IMAGE As Prophet becomes transformed into a Disciple hunter, he, Kirby, and rogue Disciple D.S.-9 go on the road to escape the U.S. Government. And they meet up with a new supporting character called Kerouac. (That was a joke, folks.) By Rob Liefeld and Stephen Platt. **$1.95**



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Green Lantern #53

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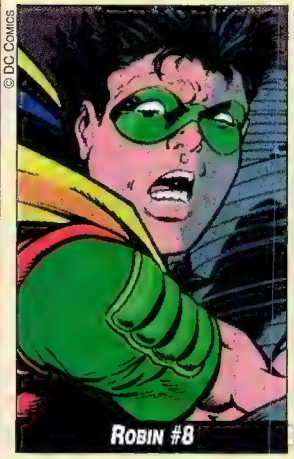
Magnus Robot Fighter #39

MORE PICKS



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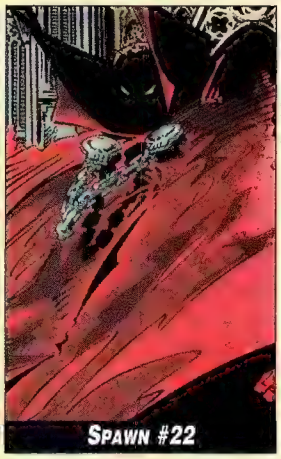

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ROBIN #8

DC COMICS "KnightsEnd," Part 5 (of 10). Robin and Nightwing can only watch as Bruce Wayne goes head to head with the deadly Lady Shiva. The outcome will determine whether or not Bruce is worthy of the cape and cowl. (Wait...you mean he's been naked since "Knightfall"?!?) By Chuck Dixon, Tom Grummett, and Ray Kryssing. Grummett hints, "It's got a really cool ending... It should get everybody really excited." **$1.50**

SANDMAN #62

VERTIGO/DC "The Kindly Ones" moves on as this issue sees the return of a mysterious stranger, an ugly murder, a dubious surprise, and other vague stuff. By Neil Gaiman, Marc Hempel, and D'Israeli. **$1.95**

SPAWN #22

IMAGE Spawn breaks down like a little girly-man in front of Terry Fitzgerald (who, oddly enough, is Todd's real-life assistant), and tells him the whole truth about who he is. (OK, maybe he doesn't break down like a girly-man, but it sure sounded dramatic to me.) Also, Overt-Kill returns just in time to ask, "What the hell is that 't' doing in the middle of my name?" By Todd McFarlane. **$1.95**

SPECTACULAR SPIDER-MAN #214

MARVEL The conclusion of "Hail Mary." When Typhoid Mary exacts revenge on men who commit crimes against women, Spidey must take her down, even though part of him sympathizes with her. But then Lorena Bobbitt shows up and...ah, never mind. By Ann Nocenti, James Fry, and Sal Buscema. **$1.50**

THE SPECTRE #20

DC COMICS Professor Nicodemus Hazzard is seeking a way to control (or is that eliminate?) the Spectre. His mission leads him to the dreaded "Spear of Destiny," and to the Spectre's former allies, the Justice Society of America. By John Ostrander and guest artist John Ridgway. Assistant editor Peter Tomasi says, "This issue is a prologue to the 'Spear of Destiny' storyline coming up, and we get into the Spectre's origin with the JSA." **$1.75**

SPIDER-MAN #48

MARVEL Spidey tries to prevent Demogoblin from wrecking New York, just as the Hobgoblin's thirst for power leads him to Kraven the Hunter's son. Are we witnessing the dawn of an even more powerful Goblin? (Probably not, because Spidey'll still kick his butt. It's in the *Marvel Rule Book for Brawls*: "Spidey must always win.") By Howard Mackie, Tom Lyle, and Scott Hanna. **$1.95**

STORMWATCH #25

IMAGE In this "Images of Tomorrow" future story, StormWatch battles the WarGuard and its leader, Patriarch. Only Battalion has a chance to end the madness. (Who's Battalion?) By Steve Seagle and Scott Clark. Also this month: *Brigade* #25, *Bloodstrike* #25, and *Supreme* #25, which all allow readers to glimpse into the future. (In this future, *WetWorks* is still not out. Yet it's out in the *Danger Unlimited* future. Go figure.) **$2.50**

SUPERBOY #6

DC COMICS "Worlds Collide," Part 3 (of 14). Superboy does the tango with the superimproved Parasite after "The Battle for Metropolis." Then, Fred Bentson (no relation to Robby—he's too busy doing socially conscious movies and cartoon voices) pulls Superboy into the Milestone Universe. By Karl Kesel, Tom Grummett, and Doug Hazlewood. Grummett says, "It's one of the entry points into the really cool 'Worlds Collide' crossover. The issue guest stars Superman. It's packed with some good stuff." **$1.50**

SUPERMAN: THE MAN OF STEEL #35

DC COMICS "The Fall of Metropolis," Part 2 (of 5) *and* "Worlds Collide" Part 1 (of 14). (Now that's a lot of tie-ins!) Luthor's gonna finish off Metropolis if it kills him, and it looks like it will. Supes, in the meantime, ain't gonna let it happen. By Louise Simonson, Jon Bogdanove, and Dennis Janke. This ties in with *Superman* #91 and *Adventures of Superman* #514, in which the dung really hits the fan (and Lois). And, hey, that Fred Bentson guy shows up again with his strange dreams. **$1.50**

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MORE PICKS

Superman/Doomsday: Hunter/Prey #3
DC COMICS Doomsday and Superman clash for the final time! (Yeah, right. We thought the *last* time was "final.") But Doomsday's ability to adapt has enabled him to utilize new methods of survival. Will Superman be able to stop him this time, or will he die and make loads of cash for DC again? By Dan Jurgens and Brett Breeding. **$4.95**

Turok: Dinosaur Hunter Yearbook #1
VALIANT Y'know, when Mon-Ark the Bionisaur king got his head blown off a while back, you probably thought he'd stay dead. Well, such is not the case. Mon-Ark is alive and...well, different. (This sounds more like a '60s drive-in movie than a comic.) By Mike Baron, Dave Cockrum, and Gonzalo Mayo. Painted cover by Eric Hope. Baron says, "The story concerns Omen Enterprises retrieving Mon-Ark's electronic memory and implanting it in the body of a human. Mon-Ark not only takes over the body, but Omen, more or less." **$3.95**

Uncanny X-Men #314
MARVEL Where's Iceman, you ask? With Emma Frost, the White Queen, that's where. (Wow, and we thought she was dead.) Unfortunately, she's too busy directing the rest of the X-Men onto the trail of Phalanx to tell 'em where he's at. By Scott Lobdell, John Romita Jr., and Dan Green. **$1.50**

Venom: The Mace #3 (of 3)
MARVEL Venom and Mace face the Sunrise Society's ninjas in a final nervous system-rending brawl. Will they survive? (Of course they will, but let's suspend disbelief anyway. Ahem...) *Will they???* By Carl Potts, Liam Sharp, and Bill Reinhold. **$2.95**

Web of Spider-Man #114
MARVEL "Live and Let Die," Part 2. Introducing Facade, an all-new villain with whom Spidey must reckon. But then again, Spidey is such a licensing giant that even Facade could never do any true damage to him. So as far as we're concerned, Facade is nothing but a farcical attempt to trick fans into thinking there could possibly be a real threat to Spidey. (Well, we'll suspend disbelief again, OK?) By Terry Kavanagh, Alex Saviuk, and Stephen Baskerville. **$1.50**

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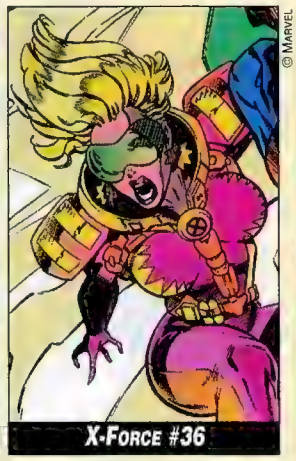
Wolverine #83


X-Force #36

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WildC.A.T.s #11
IMAGE As the WildC.A.T.s are controlled by the evil Tapestry (aka Carole King), Zealot must seek help from some old friends to free them. (Here come the Bugaloos!) This issue introduces Zealot's sister, Savant; Soldier; and the forgotten Kherubim lord, Mr. Majestic. By Chris Claremont and Jim Lee. **$2.50**

Wolverine #83
MARVEL Wolvie goes to Japan to confront Mariko's daughter. It's a good thing he gets to run into swell (or is that swell-headed?) guys like the Silver Samurai and Sunfire... By Larry Hama, Adam Kubert, and Mike Sellers. **$1.95**

X-Factor #104
MARVEL Mr. Sinister strikes for the umpteenth time! And he's behind the possession of Alex Summers. Uh-oh—will our heroes be able to halt his evil scheme? (Boy, I hope not; just once, I'd like to see an X-team get pummeled so badly that they'd be afraid to star in their own book again. Dare to dream...) By J.M. DeMatteis, Jan Duursema, and Al Milgrom. **$1.50**

X-Force #36
MARVEL The Nimrod story concludes here, and the team must make some difficult choices that will soon cost them dearly. ("Um, do I wear this costume...or *this* one?" "Does my code name *have* to be one syllable?" "Do I put my jacks in this pouch...or in *this* one?") By Fabian Nicieza, Tony Daniel, and Jon Holdredge. **$1.50**

X-Men #34
MARVEL The Beast, searching for a cure for the Techno Virus, breaks into Mr. Sinister's lab, only to discover what's happened to Threnody, who's been left in Sinister's care. It's not a pretty sight. By Fabian Nicieza, Andy Kubert, and Matt Ryan. **$1.50**

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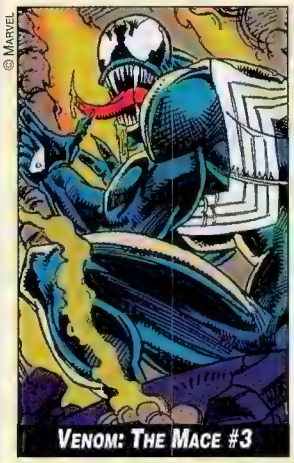
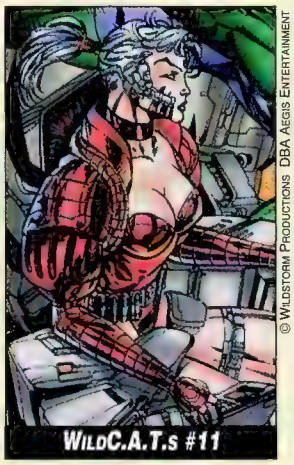

Venom: The Mace #3


WildC.A.T.s #11

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This is a list of the coolest books for younger readers shipping in the month of May.

Barbie #43
MARVEL When Ken decides to repair his old boat, the Skipper can't wait to get on the high seas. Too bad he doesn't expect the hard work that comes with it! Also, Barbie teaches a course on bookbinding. By Barbara Slate, Anna-Maria Cool, and John Lucas. **$1.50**

Carl Barks Library of Donald Duck Adventures in Color #5
GLADSTONE This classic "library album" lets you relive comic legend Carl Barks's timeless Donald Duck stories, which are fun for both children and adults. Plus, in this issue, read Barks's only Mickey Mouse story! **$7.95**

The Jetsons #1
HARVEY For the first time in nearly 20 years, the Jetsons have a brand-new comic book debut! In this issue, George tries to make Elroy "King of the Speedway." By Earl Kress, Kirk Hanson, and Bill Hill. **$1.50**

The Lion King #1
MARVEL This 48-page book adapts Disney's upcoming movie, *The Lion King*! Ever wonder what it's like to be a young lion cub destined to become the king of the jungle? Just ask Simba and you'll find out in this gem. By Bobbie J.G. Weiss and Sparky More. **$2.50**

Looney Tunes #4
DC COMICS This issue puts a new spin on the story of Marco Polo when Daffy Duck becomes Ducko Polo. Plus more zany tales starring Bugs Bunny, Witch Hazel, and Wile E. Coyote. **$1.50**

Scooby Doo #1
HARVEY In his all-new comic book, Scooby, along with Scrappy and Shaggy, investigates a haunted movie theme park. By Michael Kirschenbaum, Gordon Morison, Alfredo Alcala, and Jorge Pacheco. **$1.50**

Sonic the Hedgehog #13
ARCHIE In this issue, the evil Robotnik creates an orbiting space weapon, hoping to transform Sonic and friends into mindless robots! Can the hedgehog escape this menace? By Angelo DeCesare and Art Mawhinney. **$1.50**

Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles Adventures #59
ARCHIE "Blindsight," Part 1 (of 2). When Michaelangelo is captured by the government, Leonardo and Donatello launch a risky high-seas rescue! By Dean Clarrain and Chris Allan. **$1.50**

Walt Disney's Comics and Stories #592
GLADSTONE This issue features stories starring Donald Duck and Mickey Mouse! Plus, a tribute to Donald. **$2.95**

© Hanna-Barbera

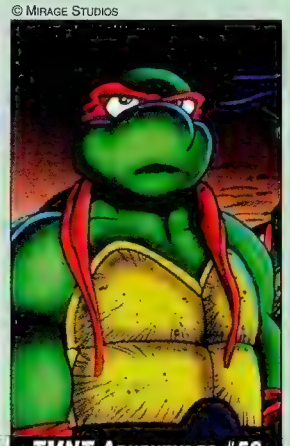
The Jetsons #1

© Hanna-Barbera

Scooby Doo #1

© Sega of America

Sonic the Hedgehog #13

© Mirage Studios

TMNT Adventures #59

PREMIERES

Comic book collectors place a great deal of importance on #1 and #0 issues. Since it's tricky to determine whether a book will succeed, you have to choose your comics very carefully. Number one and zero issues have been known to appreciate considerably when a series becomes popular. This is a list of all the #1 and #0 issues which are shipping in May. (CE indicates a Collector's Edition.)

Aliens: Stronghold #1
Dark Horse $2.50

Badge #1
Vanguard $2.95

Black Cat #1
Marvel Comics $1.50

Blade: The Vampire Hunter #1
Marvel Comics $2.95

Caravan Kidd Part 3 #1
Dark Horse $2.50

Casey Jones Special #1
Mirage $2.75

Damnation #1
Fantagraphics $2.95

Dark Horse Downunder #1
Dark Horse $2.50

Don Simpson's Bizarre Heroes #1
Fiasco Comics $2.95

El Gato Negro #1
Azteca $2.00

Enemy #1
Dark Horse $2.50

Flame #1
Q-Comics $1.95

Force Works #1
Marvel Comics $3.95

Galactic Guardians #1
Marvel Comics $1.50

Grendel Tales: Devil in Our Midst #1
Dark Horse $2.95

Hellspawn #1
Topps Comics $2.50

James Bond 007: Shattered Helix #1
Dark Horse $2.50

Jonny Demon #1
Dark Horse $2.50

Kilroy #0
Caliber Press $2.95

Lady Death Swimsuit Special #1
Chaos! Comics $2.50

Legionnaires Annual #1
DC Comics $2.95

Lightning Comics Presents #1
Lightning Comics $3.50

The Lion King #1
Marvel Comics $2.50

Mars Attacks #1
Topps Comics $2.95

Martha Washington Goes To War #1
Dark Horse $2.95

Martini Barton #1
Fantagraphics $2.95

Marvel Masterpieces II #1
Marvel Comics $2.95

Nightvenger #1
Axis Comics $1.95

Prudence & Caution #1
Defiant $3.25

Radical Dreamer #0
Blackball Comics $1.75

Ray Bradbury Comics Special: Tales of Horror #1
Topps Comics $2.50

Razor/Dark Angel: The Final Nail #1
Boneyard Press $2.95

Santana #1
Rock-It/Malibu $3.95

Shadowhawk Gallery #1
Image Comics $1.95

Star Slammers #1
Bravura/Malibu $2.50

Starwatchers #1
Valiant $3.50

Steel Annual #1
DC Comics $2.95

Titan Special #1
Dark Horse $3.95

Turok: Dinosaur Hunter Yearbook #1
Valiant $3.95

Unity TPB Vol. 1
Valiant $10.95

Violator #1
Image Comics $1.95

Warstrike #1
Ultraverse $1.95

White Like She #1
Dark Horse $2.95

Worlds Collide #1
DC $2.50/CE $3.95

good & cheap

Good-readin' books you can still pick up cheap!

JUSTICE LEAGUE OF AMERICA © DC COMICS

Secret Origins (vol. 2) #32

Writers: *Keith Giffen and Peter David*
Artist: *Eric Shanower*
Current Value: *$2.25*

This retelling of the origin of the Justice League of America mixes action with humor and still manages to be faithful to the Gardner Fox and Mike Sekowsky story from 1962.

In the story, Aquaman, Black Canary, Flash, Green Lantern, and the Martian Manhunter, each working alone, battle strange elemental aliens. They eventually come together to defeat the creatures, and, realizing that there's strength in numbers, decide to stay together.

Interestingly enough, the original origin story from *Justice League of America* #9 had Wonder Woman as a founding member instead of Black Canary. Readers probably know that in her revised post-*Crisis* history, Wonder Woman wasn't around when the JLA was formed. Another interesting fact is that *Secret Origins* #32 plotter Giffen and editor Mark Waid thought of not having any females on the team at all, but quickly dismissed that idea. Batman and Superman, other charter members of the original team, were also omitted from this revised team.

Giffen and David give these stalwart heroes a grand sense of humor, and it's unfortunate that it lasted for only one issue. Shanower's crisp renditions of the JLA make this book a gem in anyone's collection. ☆

TOP 100

Here's the list for APRIL...
a countdown of the most–ordered titles as reported by Diamond Comic Distributors Inc. **(CE=Collector's Edition)**

what was hOt 1 yeAr ago...

1. Adventures of Superman #500 CE (DC)
2. Action Comics #687 CE (DC)
3. Superman #78 CE (DC)
4. Adventures of Superman #501 CE (DC)
5. Superman: The Man of Steel #22 CE (DC)
6. Turok: Dinosaur Hunter #1 (Valiant)
7. Deathblow #1 (Image)
8. Spawn #12 (Image)
9. Bloodstrike #1 (Image)
10. Adventures of Superman #500 (DC)

2 yeArs ago...

1. X-Men #9 (Marvel)
2. Infinity War #1 (Marvel)
3. Uncanny X-Men #289 (Marvel)
4. X-Force #11 (Marvel)
5. Silver Sable #1 (Marvel)
6. Spider-Man #23 (Marvel)
7. Amazing Spider-Man #363 (Marvel)
8. Ghost Rider #26 (Marvel)
9. Spectacular Spider-Man #189 (Marvel)
10. Youngblood #3 (Image)

3 yeArs ago...

1. X-Force #1 (Marvel)
2. Spider-Man #13 (Marvel)
3. Uncanny X-Men #279 (Marvel)
4. Infinity Gauntlet #2 (Marvel)
5. Uncanny X-Men Annual #15 (Marvel)
6. Amazing Spider-Man #350 (Marvel)
7. X-Factor #69 (Marvel)
8. Batman #467 (DC)
9. X-Factor Annual #16 (Marvel)
10. Ghost Rider #16 (Marvel)

1. X-Men #33 (Marvel)
2. Spawn #21 (Image)
3. Uncanny X-Men #313 (Marvel)
4. Superman/Doomsday #1 (DC)
5. Superman/Doomsday #2 (DC)
6. Action Comics #700 (DC)
7. WildC.A.T.s #10 (Image)
8. Wolverine #82 (Marvel)
9. Adv. of Cyclops & Phoenix #2 (Marvel)
10. X-Men Unlimited #5 (Marvel)
11. X-Force #35 (Marvel)
12. Superman #90 (DC)
13. Uncanny X-Men Annual #18 (Marvel)
14. Amazing Spider-Man #390 CE (Marvel)
15. Adventures of Superman #513 (DC)
16. Detective Comics #675 CE (DC)
17. Superman: The Man of Steel #34 (DC)
18. X-Men 2099 #9 (Marvel)
19. Spider-Man #46 CE (Marvel)
20. Cyberforce #4 (Image)
21. X-Factor #103 (Marvel)
22. Batman #508 (DC)
23. Beavis & Butt-Head #4 (Marvel)
24. Web of Spider-Man #113 CE (Marvel)
25. Robin #7 (DC)
26. Gen^{13} #3 (Image)
27. Spec. Spider-Man #213 CE (Marvel)
28. Incredible Hulk #418 CE (Marvel)
29. Cable #12 (Marvel)
30. Batman: Shadow of the Bat #28 (DC)
31. StormWatch #9 (Image)
32. Green Lantern #53 (DC)
33. Batman: Legends...Dark Knight #61 (DC)
34. Newmen #1 (Image)
35. Prophet #6 (Image)
36. Venom: The Mace #2 (Marvel)
37. Spider-Man #47 (Marvel)
38. Savage Dragon #10 (Image)
39. Superboy #5 (DC)
40. Star Wars: Droids #1 (Dark Horse)
41. Kindred #2 (Image)
42. Spider-Man 2099 #20 (Marvel)
43. Ghost Rider #50 CE (Marvel)
44. Ghost Rider 2099 #2 (Marvel)
45. Superman Annual #6 (DC)
46. Excalibur #78 (Marvel)
47. Catwoman #11 (DC)
48. Fantastic Four #389 (Marvel)
49. Avengers #375 CE (Marvel)
50. Sandman #61 (DC)
51. Spider-Man/X-Factor: Shadowgames #2 (Marvel)
52. Batman Annual #18 (DC)
53. Bartman #2 (Bongo)
54. Detective Comics Annual #7 (DC)
55. Brigade #9 (Image)
56. Team Youngblood #8 (Image)
57. Daredevil #329 (Marvel)
58. Steel #5 (DC)
59. Ninjak #5 (Valiant)
60. Bloodstrike #10 (Image)
61. Radioactive Man #216 (Bongo)
62. Supreme #12 (Image)
63. Ren & Stimpy #19 (Marvel)
64. Thor #475 CE (Marvel)
65. What If...? #62 (Marvel)
66. The Pact #2 (Image)
67. Sin City: A Dame to Kill For #6 (Dark Horse)
68. Lobo #6 (DC)
69. Silver Surfer #93 (Marvel)
70. Dreadstar #1 (Malibu)
71. Conan The Adventurer #1 (Marvel)
72. Blackwulf #1 (Marvel)
73. Spider-Man Classics #15 CE (Marvel)
74. X-O Manowar #30 (Valiant)
75. Captain America #428 (Marvel)
76. The Huntress #1 (DC)
77. Armorines #2 (Valiant)
78. Freak Force #5 (Image)
79. Secret Weapons #11 (Valiant)
80. X-Men Adventures Season II #5 (Marvel)
81. Vengeance of Vampirella #1 (Harris)
82. Turok: Dinosaur Hunter #13 (Valiant)
83. Harbinger Files: Harada #1 (Valiant)
84. Rune #4 (Malibu)
85. War Machine #3 (Marvel)
86. Force Works #4 (Marvel)
87. Lobo: A Contract on Gawd #3 (DC)
88. Bloodshot #18 (Valiant)
89. Iron Man #305 (Marvel)
90. Doom 2099 #18 (Marvel)
91. Punisher 2099 #17 (Marvel)
92. New Warriors #48 (Marvel)
93. Marvel Tales #286 CE (Marvel)
94. Madman Comics #1 (Dark Horse)
95. Web of Spider-Man Annual #10 (Marvel)
96. Spirits of Vengeance #23 (Marvel)
97. Fantastic Four Annual #27 (Marvel)
98. Bloodshot Yearbook #1 (Valiant)
99. Solar, Man of The Atom #35 (Valiant)
100. Punisher #91 (Marvel)

IRON MAN 2020

WALT SIMONSON, WILL ROSADA AND BOB WIACEK PUT ANOTHER IRON MAN INTO THE FIRE IN THE NOT-SO FAR FLUNG FUTURE. WHEN ARNO STARK, THE IRON MAN OF 2020, ATTEMPTS TO RESCUE A COMPETITOR'S DAUGHTER IN EXCHANGE FOR CRITICAL TECHNOLOGICAL INFORMATION, A NEW CHAPTER UNFOLDS IN THE FUTURE OF 2020. IT'S A 64 PAGE BOOK SHELF EXTRAVAGANZA!

MARVELS #0

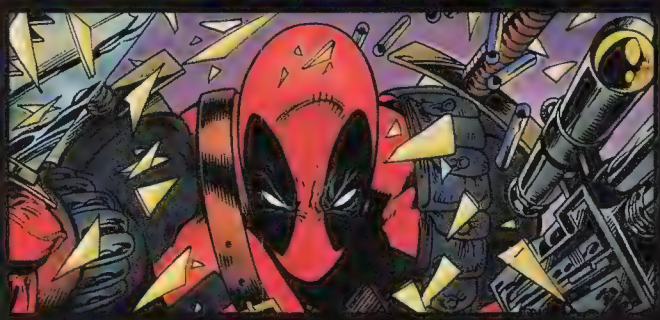
HERE'S THE PERFECT COMPANION TO THE MOST TALKED ABOUT SERIES OF THE YEAR! FEATURING THE 8 PAGE HUMAN TORCH STORY ORIGINALLY USED TO PITCH THE SERIES, AND A NUMBER OF SKETCHES AND PAINTINGS OF TODAY'S AND YESTERDAY'S HOTTEST HEROES. BY ALEX ROSS AND KURT BUSIEK.

MARVELVISION

AN INSIDE LOOK AT JUNE'S HOTTEST TITLES!!!

VENOM: NIGHTS OF VENGEANCE #1 OF 4

A BAND OF HIGH-TECH ALIENS WHO HUNT HUMANS PICK VENOM AND THE MIDNIGHT SONS' VENGEANCE FOR THEIR NEXT TARGETS. AND, HOWARD MACKIE BECOMES THE NEW WRITER ON VENOM, DEVELOPING GREATER CONTINUITY BETWEEN ALL FUTURE VENOM LIMITED SERIES. JOINING HIM ARE ARTISTS RON LIM AND AL MILGROM. FOIL-STAMPED NEON INK COVER!



DEADPOOL #1

MARK WAID AND IAN CHURCHILL BRING MARVEL'S MERCENARY WITH A MOUTH INTO A NEW ADVENTURE WITH BANSHEE AND SIRYN AS THEY GO UP AGAINST BLACK TOM AND THE JUGGERNAUT IN THE HOT SEQUEL TO LAST SUMMER'S MOST TALKED ABOUT LIMITED SERIES.

THEY'RE NOT HEROES IF YOU'RE A VILLAIN. ANNUALS FROM A NEW PERSPECTIVE ON SALE THIS JUNE

- THOR ANNUAL #19
- GUARDIANS OF THE GALAXY ANNUAL
- INCREDIBLE HULK ANNUAL #20
- PUNISHER WAR ZONE ANNUAL #2

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MARVEL COMICS

TOP 10 MAY 1994

Wizard, by staying in touch with hundreds of dealers throughout the country, keeps a close eye on the country's hottest books. Here are the 10 best-selling comics for MAY '94.

1

© Rob Liefeld Inc.

Prophet #4A
Artist
Dan Panosian
Writer
Rob Liefeld

You're probably looking at the cover to the left and saying to yourself, "Hey, this looks nothing like the *Prophet* #4 in *my* collection. What's up with that, man?" It appears that since so few of these books were printed, most people have never seen this cover. The reason the folks over at Extreme pulled this little stunt was to help herald the arrival of...of...what's his name, *Moon Knight* Boy...oh yeah, Stephen Platt. Anyway, Stephen Platt begins penciling chores on *Prophet #5*, and the stunt with *Prophet* #4A certainly made fans and dealers alike sit up and pay real close attention to this title. (Now if only Extreme could get *Prophet* #5 out on time.)

2

© MTV Networks

Beavis and Butt-Head #1
Artist
Rick Parker
Writer
Mike Lackey

Not only is *Beavis & Butt-Head* an incredibly hot comic, thanks to the megahigh profile created by the hit MTV show (and the controversy that it spawned in this great land of ours), this title can help you find out the true meaning of life. Many life- and comic-related topics are explored here in depth. Let's see: so far in this series, we've learned about Wonder Man ("Huh-huh, does he wonder why he sucks?" "Superheroes who wear glasses suck, huh-huh."), the Punisher ("Huh-huh, the Punisher kicks ass!" "Yeah, and when he kicks it, it stays kicked!"), and other enlightening subjects of this ilk. Kinda stupid, but at the same time, pretty damn funny.

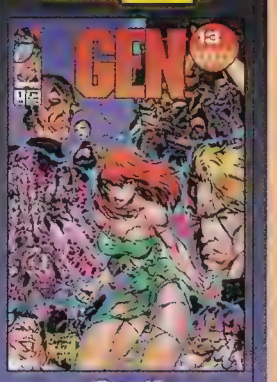
3

© Marvel Entertainment Group

X-Men #30
Artist: Andy Kubert
Writer: Fabian Nicieza

What makes this book hot? Two things: first, it features the X-Men, stars of the popular Saturday morning cartoon, which makes the kiddies want to read it. Second, it features the long-awaited and much-ballyhooed wedding of Scott (Cyclops) Summers and Jean (no code name) Grey. (Some 30 years after they met, no less. I wonder if white was really the best color for Jean's gown...) Anyone curious as to where the two lovebirds went on their honeymoon should check out page 15 of *WildC.A.T.s* #8. (Also, keep an eye open for Lois and Clark and an older Beavis and Butt-Head.)

4



© Wildstorm Productions DBA Aegis Entertainment Inc.

Gen13 #1
Artist: J. Scott Campbell
Writer: Brandon Choi

This baby jumped a whopping six spots from last month, giving us adequate reason to believe that Image has a solid hit on its hands. This series's popularity is pretty much the result of your basic four-step "let's make a hot comic" program. 1) Fill the cast with teenagers; kids relate to this. 2) Clad the babes in the group as scantily as possible, to capture the pervert market. 3) Get a guy who draws like Jim Lee to pencil it. 4) Hype it up almost a year in advance, do a #1/2 issue, and preview several pages in *Wizard*. This program makes us want to publish our own comics, 'cause they'd sell cajillions!

5

© Marvel Entertainment Group

Marvels #2
Artist: Alex Ross
Writer: Kurt Busiek

We here at *Wizard* refer to an underordered #2 issue of a new title as a "Terrible Two," and *Marvels* #2 is a definite "victim" of Terrible Twoitis. When retailers first saw their order books, in which *Marvels* was listed with a $5.95 cover price, their palms got a little sweaty and their throats dried up. This led to conservative ordering of the first two issues. After the first issue shipped, and people discovered how awesome this mini-series was, demand for subsequent issues skyrocketed. Throw in the fact that this issue features the story of the beginning of the X-Men as well as the advent of antimutant hysteria and you'll see why this book's a winner.

6

© Marvel Entertainment Group

Moon Knight #57
Artist: Stephen Platt
Writer: Terry Kavanagh

Why, it's Todd McFarlane's rendition of the world's favorite web-slinging hero, Spider-Man. Wait—upon closer inspection, that's not a Toddy Spidey at all! Then we guess it must be that new Stephen Platt guy. It appears that Mr. Platt's early work on *Moon Knight* is all the rage these days, and his first (last?) rendition of Spidey is no exception. As those of you who follow the exploits of the Top 10 already know, Platt's four full issues of *Moon Knight* (#55-#57 and #60) are tough to find; they were ordered in low quantities before Mr. Platt attracted notice. (Because let's face it: *Moon Knight* sucked.)

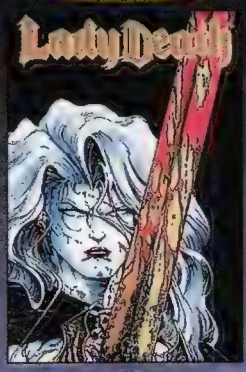
7

© Marvel Entertainment Group

Wolverine #75
Artist: Adam Kubert
Writer: Larry Hama

Here's another book that never seems to leave the Top 10. Everyone knows the scoop behind this ish: in *X-Men* #25, bad man Magneto sucked all the adamantium out of Logan's skeleton, leaving him near death. To find out exactly what happened to Wolvie, fans had to check out *Wolverine* #75. So, of course, this issue sold out all over the place, suddenly there weren't enough copies left to satisfy the legion of Wolvie and mutant fans, and prices shot through the roof. This is a situation, it appears, that's all too familiar to everyone.

8



© Brian Pulido

Lady Death #1
Artist: Steven Hughes
Writer: Brian Pulido

Lady Death #1 placed in the Top 10 again this month, and you fans probably want to know why. Being the good sports that we are, we'll tell ya why: first, the book was heavily underordered, due to the sometimes scary large cover price ($3.50) and the fact that it isn't a huge name like X-Men. (Oh wait: *X-Men* #30 was underordered, too. Damn, I'm stuck for a comparison book. Ah, whatever. It was just underordered, OK?) Second, people saw how unbelievably awesome the final cover actually was (the story was cool, too), and copies of the book were gone from shelves less than a week after it debuted. Those two factors combined for—boom—a hot book.

9

© Marvel Entertainment Group

Gambit #1
Artist: Lee Weeks
Writer: Howard Mackie

In the music, movie, and publishing businesses, any project that stays popular for a long time is referred to as "having legs." As far as the comic book business goes, *Gambit* #1 has some serious legs. This title sold very well initially, but the hero's appearances on TV, his multiple comic book appearances, and his toy figure have made him one of, if not the, most popular X-Men. Secondary market demand on this book has never been higher. With four X-Men related titles in the Top 10 (five if you include *Gen*^{13}, aka *New Mutants II: The Sequel*), mutant mania is runnin' wild!

10

© DC Comics

Green Lantern #47
Artist: Scott Kolins
Writer: Gerard Jones

Right on the cover of this baby, Green Arrow asks us, "You got a problem with that?," and our retort is a resounding, "Yes, we do!" The problem is finding a copy of this book, a largely ignored issue that fell between the now-famous "Reign of the Supermen" tie-in story in issue #46 and the start of the "Emerald Twilight" storyline in issue #48. Collectors and readers who are searching for this book are learning that it's as hard to find as Sharon Stone's acting skills. The demand for this ish has caused prices to take off faster than the previously mentioned Ms. Stone's clothing. ☆

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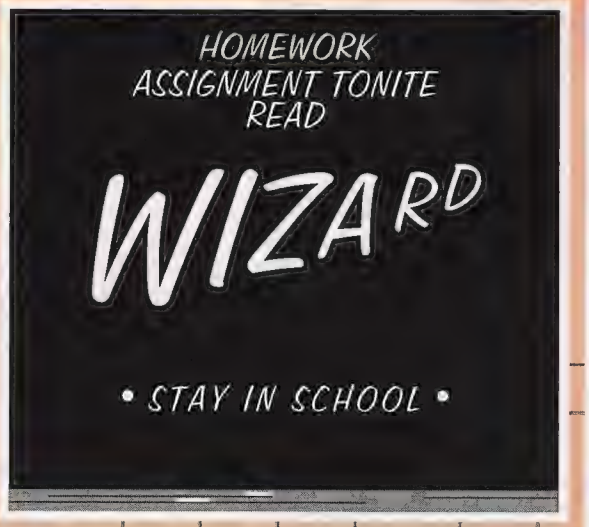

WIZARD MAGAZINE

The voice of the comic book industry: fans, collectors, artists, writers, publishers, distributors and store owners turn to Wizard for the inside track!

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Authors should submit one original and two copies of each manuscript. Articles previously published in other magazines and edited or rewritten manuscripts of previously published articles by the author are not acceptable.

Each manuscript should be typed, double-spaced, run in length between 1300 and 1500 words and be accompanied by a three- qto four-line biography about the author. Submissions for review as guest writers for any monthly department or column are also encouraged.

If artwork can be provided by the author to enhance the article, indicate this, but do not send any with the original submission. *Wizard* is looking for concise, tightly-written manuscripts that cover a subject area as thoroughly as possible in 1300 to 1500 words. All manuscripts are subject to editorial review and revision to conform to the editorial criteria of *Wizard*. All material in *Wizard The Guide To Comics* is protected by copyright and may not be published elsewhere without written permission from *Wizard*.

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Wizard The Guide To Comics
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Chestnut Ridge, NY 10977

Wizard Market WATCH

by **Jon Warren**

X-Men and Beavis & Butt-Head Rule

Activity in the back issue market has definitely heated up since last month. Many retailers even reported increased sales of the more expensive Image and Valiant issues. The recent release market is still strong, Silver Age Marvels are doing extremely well in all grades, and the demand for Golden Age books continues to grow.

RECENT (1991-1994)

This key segment of the market has seen lots of price movement this month. Check out the Price Guide for the latest values.

MARVEL

War Machine #1 is a winner for Marvel. Its point-of-purchase display caught everyone's attention: it lights up and makes noise when people set off its motion detector, and is an awesome way to usher in this new series.

Beavis and Butt-Head is selling like crazy; collectors see it as the next *Ren & Stimpy*. The "Fatal Attractions" hologram issues, led by *Wolverine #75*, are runaway sellers. And of course, anything to do with the X-Men cartoon series is hot.

There's still incredible demand for *Moon Knight* #55-#60, drawn by Stephen Platt, with #55 and #57 being the most requested, according to several of our VIPs. #55 is Platt's first *Moon Knight*, while #57 contains Platt's first depictions of several Marvel heroes, including Spider-Man.

The *Gambit* mini-series is doing extremely well, as are all the X-titles. And last but by no means least, *Marvels* #1 and #2 are hot in all areas of the country; the first half of this beautifully painted, well-written mini-series is being snapped up by collectors. Demand and value are both going up for these books. *Marvels* #3 is also getting hot.

DC

Green Lantern #50, in which Hal Jordan decimates the GL Corps, is the hottest DC issue by far. Retailers report strong sales for the other recent *Green Lantern* issues, including the increasingly hot #47, the rare issue which preceded the "Emerald Twilight" trilogy (*Green Lantern* #48-#50).

The *Superman/Doomsday* mini-series is causing some excitement. The first few issues of their previous battle, including *Superman: The Man of Steel* #18 and *Superman* #74, are in high demand in most areas.

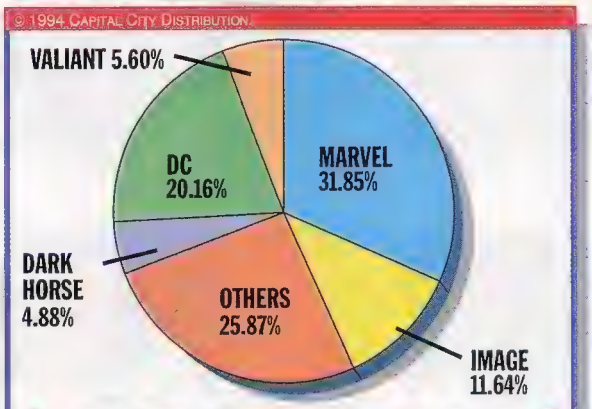
Catwoman and *Robin* are enjoying solid sales because of their Batman connection and their well-written stories. *Hawkman* is also doing well, since its hero is being characterized in exciting new ways.

The Vertigo line has its share of winners. Due to its new direction, *Swamp Thing* is hot, as is the popular *Sandman*, which is enthralling readers with its last major storyline, "The Kindly Ones," amid speculation that Sandman might die at its conclusion.

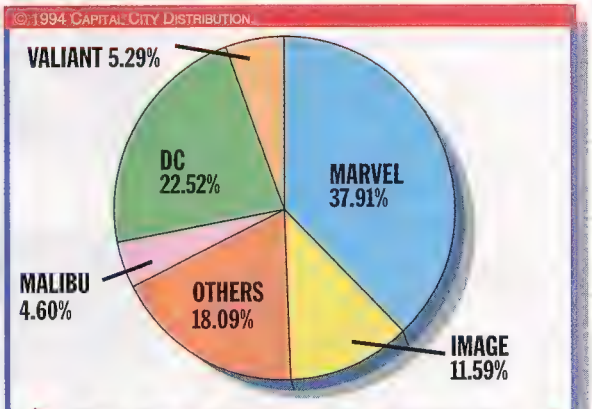
IMAGE

Todd McFarlane's *Spawn* continues to top the charts for the Image crew. But it's not too far ahead of *Gen*[13] #1 and #2, which were nationwide sellouts.

Stephen Platt, who's definitely the golden boy of the moment, had another hit even before he finished penciling the interiors of his first issue of *Prophet*! Image, in order to give fans a Platt preview, placed an original Platt cover on roughly 20% of the copies of *Prophet #4*. This caused a good deal of hysteria in comic stores: when collectors found out about the special edition, they gobbled up as many Platt-covered copies of the book as they could. This is an extremely hot book, and #5 should sustain the momentum.



Dollar Share of the Comic Book Market for MARCH, according to Capital City Distribution



Piece Share of the Comic Book Market for MARCH, according to Capital City Distribution

VALIANT

Ninjak continues to dominate the interest of Valiant fans. It's hot both as a new issue and a back issue, although some retailers report that Ninjak's first appearances in *Bloodshot* #6 and #7 have stabilized for the moment. In general, our VIPs report that Valiant back issues are beginning to sell again. Issues in the $20 to $40 range are moving, while the "biggies" like *Harbinger* #1 and *Rai* #3 and #4—priced between $50 and $100—are selling slowly.

OTHER PUBLISHERS

Malibu Comics's Bravura line got off to a good start with *'Breed* #1 and *Power & Glory* #1. The gold stamp redemption program, in which readers collect stamps from each Bravura issue and trade them in for premium books, seems to be helping. Early Ultraverse issues such as *Prime* #1, *Hardcase* #1, *The Strangers* #1, and *Mantra* #1 are moving well, according to survey respondents.

In other news, Chaos! Comics's *Lady Death* #1, which stars the popular *Evil Ernie* character, is the big surprise of late. An eye-catching chromium cover and good timing helped make this new release an absolute sellout across the nation. Copies are tough to come by, and prices have escalated.

Cartoon Books's *Bone* continues to be a hot seller, though most retailers have said that they're buyers, not sellers, at the moment. The reason? They've sold out, and collectors still want more! The first issue sells for about $160, while #2-#6 all go for double digits. Second through fourth printings of the early issues are hard to find, so pick 'em up; they're collector's items that are fun to read!

MODERN AGE (1970-1990)

DC

Early issues of *Sandman* (the current series) are the backbone of DC's modern market, thanks in part to excitement over the current storyline. But the *Swamp Thing* series from the '70s is still snapped up by collectors when available, because of its good horror tales by creators Len Wein and Berni Wrightson.

MARVEL

The original *X-Men* series dominates the interest of '70s Marvel collectors; this series is a 15-year phenomenon that could be the topic of an article all by itself. *Giant-Size X-Men* #1 and *X-Men* #94, the first two appearances of the megapopular New X-Men, are the key books in this category. *Iron Fist* #14, the first appearance of Sabretooth, is also hot, and has been rapidly rising in value, mainly because of the character's recent association with the X-Men. Collector demand remains strong at current prices. The early Wolverine appearances are strong at current price levels, too.

SILVER AGE (1955-1970)

MARVEL

Amazing Spider-Man and *X-Men* (vol. 1) lead the way for the Marvel half of the Silver Age market. The hottest issues outside of the mainstays are *Fantastic Four* #48 (first Silver Surfer) and *Incredible Hulk* #1-#6.

Movement in prehero Marvels, especially prototype issues, has turned into a real market force. A prototype issue contains a "tryout" story using an early version of a major character; for example, in *Tales of Suspense* #16, Marvel used a hero named Metallo to see if Iron Man would be a viable character. Prehero issues of *Strange Tales*, *Tales to Astonish*, *Tales of Suspense*, and *Journey into Mystery* are flying out of retailers' boxes.

WIZARD'S TOP TEN HOTTEST ARTISTS

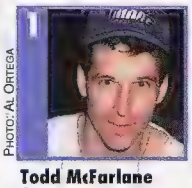


Photo: Al Ortega

1 **Todd McFarlane**
Spawn

2 **Joe Quesada**
upcoming: Florida

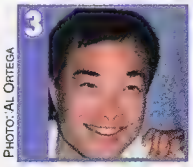


Photo: Al Ortega

3 **Jim Lee**
WildC.A.T.s

4 **Stephen Platt**
Prophet

Photo: Lynn Varley

5 **Frank Miller**
Sin City: A Dame to Kill For

6 **Bart Sears**
Violator

7 **Greg Capullo**
Violator

Photo: Al Ortega

8 **Marc Silvestri**
Cyberforce

9 **Dale Keown**
Pitt

Photo: J. Schuyler

10 **Andy Kubert**
X-Men

WIZARD'S TOP TEN HOTTEST WRITERS

Photo: Lynn Varley

1 **Frank Miller**
Sin City: A Dame to Kill For

Photo: Al Ortega

2 **Neil Gaiman**
Sandman

3 **Peter David**
Incredible Hulk, Aquaman, Sachs & Violens

4 **John Byrne**
Next Men, Danger Unlimited

Photo: Mitch Jenkins

5 **Alan Moore**
Violator

Photo: Al Ortega

6 **Fabian Nicieza**
New Warriors, Nova, X-Men, Night Thrasher

7 **Dan Jurgens**
Superman

8 **Chris Claremont**
WildC.A.T.s

Photo: Al Ortega

9 **Jim Shooter**
Warriors of Plasm

10 **Ron Marz**
Green Lantern, Silver Surfer

WIZARD'S TOP TEN HOTTEST ARTISTS AND WRITERS LISTS ARE DERIVED FROM A NATIONWIDE DEALER SURVEY.

DC

Showcase #1-#40 continue to fuel the DC half of the Silver Age market. Strong demand continues for DC war books, especially *All-American Men At War, Star Spangled War Stories, Our Army At War* (#81 particularly, as it features Sgt. Rock's debut), and *G.I. Combat.* Longtime Silver Age DC collectors know how scarce these books are, and realize that they're still a good value at current prices.

OTHER PUBLISHERS

Dell cartoon books such as *The Flintstones* and *Bullwinkle* are the notable standouts this month. Demand for these is growing daily, because most of these titles are TV tie-ins, and there's a lot of collector interest in the TV market. The rarity of these "crossover" books significantly helps their value.

SALES REPORTS

Wizard VIPs report these interesting recent sales of Silver Age books:

Amazing Fantasy #15
VGF- **$2,200**

Amazing Spider-Man #1
VF- **$6,700**

Avengers #1
VF- **$1,200**

X-Men (vol. 1) #1
F- **$760**

Note that the prices in the *Wizard* Price Guide are for Near Mint (NM) copies.

GOLDEN AGE (1938-1954)

Demand is still strong. Collectors snap up early issues of mainstream titles and almost any superhero books. However, store owners continue to bemoan the small supply and their inability to restock. This tug of war between supply and demand will only become fiercer as the number of Golden Age collectors increases.

Here are some sales of note of Golden Age books reported by our VIPs:

Action Comics #23
VG+ **$400**

Adventure Comics #61
VF+ **$2,600**

All-American Comics #16
G+ **$5,000**

All-Flash #1
FVF **$1,800**

Batman #1
G **$5,000**

Captain America #1
VG **$6,000**

Superman #1
GVG **$6,000** ☆

Market WATCHERS

Welcome to a new section in *Wizard*'s Market Watch, in which we answer your letters about prices and collecting comic books.

Dear *Wizard*,

I have noticed that there are quite a few titles missing from the guide. Even though they are mostly obscure titles, there are people out there who still collect these titles (me, for example). Listing these titles could establish *Wizard* as a very reliable price guide, instead of one that merely lists the current "in" comics.

I have also noticed that the artists for the older comics are not given [in the introduction to the price guide]. One very glaring omission is the name of the legendary Mike Ploog. Older comic fans know Mike Ploog as one of the greatest artists of the '70s. You guys have something against him, or what?

Leonard Chuah
Selangor, Malaysia

You're definitely not alone in wanting "obscure" titles to have a place in our price guide. The main reason most of these books aren't listed is that they're presently experiencing little or no market activity; people just aren't buying or selling them. A few months ago, we had to delete several titles like this—mostly titles that had ceased publication—for space reasons, even though these books had a fair readership in their time. However, we're constantly watching these books, and if any are the subject of market interest, we'll definitely return them to the guide.

As for your other question, that's easily answered: the great Marvel artist Mike Ploog (who worked on *Marvel Spotlight*, *Man-Thing*, and *Ghost Rider*, among other titles) is now a part of what we call the Intro to the Price Guide. If there's any reader out there who feels an artist or writer has been unfairly omitted from our always-expanding creator list, let us know.

Dear *Wizard*,

Why do you guys have the signed Capital City Distribution *Spawn* TPB so low? Come on, guys, only 1,200 were printed... Now, how many *Spider-Man* platinums, *WildC.A.T.s* golds, and all those other premium books were printed? Probably a minimum of 5,000 or more, and they value from $35 to $250. Since this is true, shouldn't the *Spawn* TPB be worth a lot because: 1) it's signed by McFarlane, 2) there aren't any other *Spawn* special or premium books, and 3) it had a very, very short print run? Think about it.

Bernie Mangiboyat
Dragon's Lair
Fayetteville, NC

The value we have listed for the collection—$175—was calculated from data on the surveys sent in by the members of our nationwide retailer network. After further research, we recently compiled a new value, $225. Of course, we'll continue to keep track of it.

Dear *Wizard*,

I've been waiting for the value of *The Maxx* #1/2 since it came out... I would like to know if you could publish it soon.

Patrick Keck
Henderson, NV

Starting with issue #33 (actually, it was featured in #32's Tip Sheet—another new feature for you collectors), the regular edition has been listed at $8.00, and the hard-to-find gold foil edition at $75. We were a bit wary about listing a market value for a book we co-published, but since many people clamored for it, we obtained these prices from our retailer network.

Continued thataway

Market WATCHERS

Dear *Wizard*,

My first [topic is] polybags. The only thing I see that these are good for is for including cards, posters, et cetera with a comic, instead of having them bound in the book. The way I see it, most people bag their comics anyway, so just put the card or whatever in your own "bag 'n' board" saving system. That way, it is still in a bag, and with the bonus it came with. Like I always say, "Bag the bag, then bag the book."

Also, in your price guide, you don't have *New Mutants Annual* #7 listed. Where is it?

David M. Baxter
Wallingford, CT

Basically, I agree with you—any polybagged comic which after being carefully opened and *read* is placed back in the polybag itself with the extra contents and then bagged and boarded, should be worth as much as the original item. This would enable collectors to read their "polybooks" and not fret about cutting their value in half when they cut open the bag.

Unfortunately, this is not the case: it seems that when a comic is taken out of its bag, it's considered a damaged book. This is directly related to the incentive coupon problem (which publishers are dealing with in innovative ways these days), whereby comics without their bound-in coupons are worth a fraction of "uncut" books.

Hopefully, retailers and collectors alike will one day agree on a pricing system for these kinds of books. Until then, we welcome any thoughts on the subject, some of which may be printed here.

***New Mutants Annual* #7 is now listed in the guide; its omission was a simple oversight.**

Before I go, I'd like to thank Fabian Seenarraine of Queens, N.Y., for his *Web of Spider-Man* info. Thanks, Fabian!

—Marc Wilkofsky

If you have a question or comment regarding our Comic Book Price Guide or comic collecting in general, please send a letter to:

Market Watchers
c/o Wizard Press
151 Wells Ave.
Congers, NY 10920-2064

WIN! *Amazing Spider-Man* #238

The first appearance of Hobgoblin!

© Marvel

Missing Link

Hi there! Welcome to *Wizard*'s newest monthly contest. Here's the deal: every month, in the Market Watch column, we'll list three comic book issues that contain something in common, in terms of content, characters, creators, or the like. Your job is to tell us what that something is. (Actually, we already know what it is. But we want to know that *you* know too!)

For example, what do *Uncanny X-Men* #144, *Marvel Team-Up* #122, and *She-Hulk* (vol. 2) #8 all have in common? That's easy: all three feature guest appearances by the Man-Thing.

Get the idea? Of course, we won't make each contest *that* easy. You'll usually have to read through the books to find the answers, but hey, how hard could that be for you comic lovers? By the way, you won't have to be a regular reader of the particular books to figure out the answer.

We'll randomly select an entry out of all the correct ones we receive. The winner of this month's contest will receive an *Amazing Spider-Man* #238, the first appearance of the Hobgoblin, with the tattoo which originally came with the book—a package currently valued at $60! So good luck, and good sleuthing!

Here's the first batch o' books:

© Marvel

Gambit #4

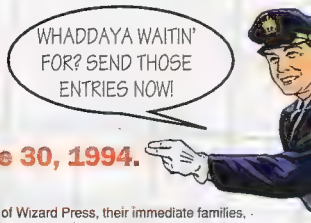
© DC Comics

Justice League America #75

© DC Comics

Legion of Super-Heroes (vol. 4) #50

Send all entries to:
Missing Link #34
c/o Wizard Press
151 Wells Ave.
Congers, NY 10920-2064
All entries must be received by June 30, 1994.



If you can read this fine print, then you're in.

No purchase necessary. Contest is open to anyone except employees of Wizard Press, their immediate families, and that Jon Warren guy. Print your name, address, city, state, zip code, telephone number with area code, and the Missing Link on a three-by-five-inch index card or a standard postcard. Enter as many times as you like. Mail each entry to Missing Link #34, c/o Wizard Press, 151 Wells Ave., Congers, NY 10920-2064. Limit one entry per envelope. No mechanical reproductions will be accepted. All entries become the property of Wizard Press, and none will be returned. All taxes (federal, state, and local, if any) will be the responsibility of the prize winner. No cash equivalent or substitute prize is offered. The prize will be awarded in the name of the contest winner and is not transferable. Offer void where prohibited, regulated, or restricted by law in a manner inconsistent with the purpose and rules hereof. **All entries must be received at contest headquarters by June 30, 1994.** Wizard Press is not responsible for lost, late, misdirected, or mutilated entries. Odds of winning will be determined by the number of valid entries received prior to the closing date of the contest. The prize winner will be selected in a random drawing from all properly completed entry forms received at contest headquarters. The random drawing will be conducted on July 1, 1994, by Wizard Press. All decisions are final.

For the name of the winner, available after July 31, 1994, send a stamped, self-addressed envelope to Missing Link #34 Winner, c/o Wizard Press, 151 Wells Ave., Congers, NY 10920-2064, or just watch this column!

Wiz Quiz 34

Each month, *Wizard* will ask what you thought about this issue of the magazine and what you enjoy about comic books.

Why? Well, we believe in giving our readers exactly what they're looking for in the #1 Guide to Comics. Longtime *Wizard* fans have seen the magazine evolve over the years, and they know that we've made the changes we have because the fans asked for them. Don't miss this chance! Your opinions will change the contents of this magazine!

WHAT DID YOU THINK OF THE ARTICLES IN THIS MONTH'S EDITION OF *WIZARD*?

I Was A Teenage Mutant!	❍ Great	❍ Okay	❍ Lame
In Darkest Night...	❍ Great	❍ Okay	❍ Lame
Big Babies 3	❍ Great	❍ Okay	❍ Lame
Prime Suspect	❍ Great	❍ Okay	❍ Lame
Bone-a Fide Success	❍ Great	❍ Okay	❍ Lame
Storm Warning	❍ Great	❍ Okay	❍ Lame

CHECK OFF THE CONTESTS IN THIS ISSUE OF *WIZARD* WHICH YOU ENTERED.

❍ Enveloping Letter Art ❍ Bowling Odyssey ❍ Homemade Heroes
❍ Party with Liefeld ❍ Sabretooth Sweepstakes ❍ Mars Attacks Contest
❍ The Drawing Board ❍ Simpsons Contest ❍ Missing Link Contest

IN ORDER OF MOST FAVORITE TO LEAST FAVORITE, LIST YOUR FIVE FAVORITE COMIC BOOK ARTISTS.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

IN ORDER OF MOST FAVORITE TO LEAST FAVORITE, LIST YOUR FIVE FAVORITE COMIC BOOK WRITERS.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

IN ORDER OF MOST FAVORITE TO LEAST FAVORITE, LIST YOUR FIVE FAVORITE COMIC BOOK CHARACTERS, INCLUDING HEROES, HEROINES, VILLAINS, ET CETERA.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT MULTIPART CROSSOVER STORYLINES IN COMICS? (CHECK ONE.)

❍ I like 'em.
❍ They don't affect my comic purchasing decisions.
❍ I hate 'em, and I refuse to buy 'em.

HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT COUPON/STAMP REDEMPTION OFFERS FOR LIMITED EDITION COMICS? (CHECK ONE.)

❍ I like 'em, and send away for the limited edition comic.
❍ They don't affect my comic purchasing decisions.
❍ I hate 'em, and never buy the item being offered.
❍ I don't purchase the mailaway item until I find it for sale.

WHERE DO YOU USUALLY READ *WIZARD*? (CHECK ONE.)

❍ At home ❍ At school ❍ In the car/bus/subway ❍ In the can

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NASSAU 3

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STEPHEN PLATT
SAT. & SUN.
" PROPHET "
Image Comics

DAN FRAGA
SAT. & SUN.
" BLACKFLAG "
" DEATHMATE RED "
" YOUNGBLOOD #0 "

GREG CAPULLO
SATURDAY
" SPAWN #16, #17, #18 "
"ANGELA mini-series"
" RIPCLAW " Image Comics

AL SIMMONS
A.K.A.
" SPAWN "

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SHOWS & CONVENTIONS

Welcome to the new *Wizard* Shows & Conventions! To help connect you with the biggest and best comic book shows and conventions in your area, *Wizard* is still printing all the stuff we used to print in this department. But we've added extra space so you can find out in advance about admission discounts, creator appearances, and other superneat stuff!

These listings are as accurate as we can get 'em, but *Wizard* always recommends phoning ahead before you attend an event—show information sometimes changes after we go to press. With that in mind, it's time for all you comic-hungry hordes to go conventioneering!

CALIFORNIA

MAY 15, SAN JOSE

COMex Comics & Toy Show, Le Baron Hotel, 1350 N. First St., 80 tables, $4 admission ($3 with coupon: call for information), 10am-4pm, 510-274-3254.

MAY 20-22, OAKLAND

Coliseum Sports Card, Memorabilia & Comic Book Show, Oakland-Alameda Coliseum Exhibit Hall, I-880 & Hegenberger Rd., 280 tables, free admission, Friday: 4-9pm, Saturday: 10am-8pm, Sunday: 10am-5pm, 415-386-9036.

MAY 28, SAN FRANCISCO

San Francisco Sports Card & Comic Book Show, Cathedral Hill Hotel, 1101 Van Ness Ave. & Geary Blvd., 50 tables, $1 admission, 10am-4pm, 415-386-9036.

JUNE 5, BURLINGAME

COMex Comics & Toy Show, Airport Radisson Hotel, 1177 Airport Blvd., 50 tables, $4 admission ($3 with coupon: call for information), 10am-4pm, 510-274-3254.

FLORIDA

MAY 1, ORLANDO

Comic Book Mega-Show III, Marriott Hotel, 8001 International Dr., 60 tables, $3 admission, 10am-4:30pm, 407-426-7745. Signings: Bill Marimon (*Damage*), signer to be announced.

MAY 15, TAMPA

Comic Book Mega-Show I, Busch Gardens Ramada Resort, 280 E. Busch Blvd. & I-275, 60 tables, $3 admission, 10am-4:30pm, 407-426-7745. Signer to be announced.

MAY 22, TALLAHASSEE

Comic Book Mega-Show II, University Ctr. Holiday Inn, 316 W. Tennessee St., 40 tables, $3 admission, 10am-4pm, 407-426-7745. Signer to be announced.

ILLINOIS

MAY 14, CHICAGO

St. Cornelius Card & Comic Book Show, St.

Cornelius Church Hall, 50 tables, $1 admission, 9am-3pm, 312-763-9034.

NEW JERSEY

MAY 15, WOODBRIDGE

Four Color Comic Art Convention, The Sheraton, 515 Rte. 1 S., 40 tables, $3 admission, 10am-4pm, 908-828-5955. Guests: Boris Vallejo (fantasy artist), Julie Bell (Marvel Masterpieces cards, Fleer X-Men cards), Pedi (*Supreme* artist).

NEW YORK

MAY 8, BAYSIDE

New York Card, Comic & Collectible Auction, Adria Hotel, 220-33 Northern Blvd. (off Cross-Island Parkway), free admission, 2-7pm, 800-829-6992. Rare cards, hot signed and numbered comics, and an auction of beautiful collectibles, many with no minimum bid!

TEXAS

MAY 1, AUSTIN

Sportscards & Comics Show, Wyndham Hotel, Southpark IH-35, 35 tables, $1.50 admission, 10am-5pm, 713-449-8511. Door prizes.

MAY 7, HOUSTON
Comic Carnival, Nassau Bay Hilton, 3000 NASA Rd. 1, 75 tables, $5 admission, 10:30am-5pm, 713-659-1102. Guest artists, free autographs.

MAY 21, DALLAS
Rookie's Comic & Card Show, Park Central Hotel (formerly Marriott Hotel), LBJ Freeway & Coit Rd., 40 tables, $1 admission, 9am-4pm, 214-840-3670. Door prizes.

MAY 29, HOUSTON
Sportscards & Comics Show, Marriott Hotel, 1750 W. Loop S. (between Post Oak and San Felipe), 40 tables, $2 admission, 10am-5pm, 713-449-8511. Door prizes.

VIRGINIA

MAY 1, TYSONS CORNER
Capital Associates Comic Book & Trading Card Show, Tysons Corner Ramada Hotel, Exit 10 off I-495, 85 tables, $2 admission, 10am-4pm, 703-503-5834. ☆

If you'd like to use *Wizard*'s magic to help advertise your comic book event, call Karen Evora at (914) 268-3907.

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E.G.O.*

Breaking In

by Todd McFarlane

The question I'm most often asked is, "What's the best way to break into comics?" I think the best thing to do is to get the opinions of a lot of different professionals, because each of us have completely different stories on how we got our breaks. To help get you started, here's my opinion on the subject.

First off, if you're doing artwork, you must draw on a page that's 10 inches by 15 inches, because that's the standard size of paper that professionals draw on. Once you do your drawings, make lots of scaled-down photocopies of the pages so they fit on regular eight-and-a-half-inch-by-11-inch paper.

The easiest way to reach a lot of people is to take a comic that you think sucks and redraw the first four pages. That's relatively easy, because you don't have to think up a story; it's already there in front of you. Don't use the same number of panels or the same angles as the original artist: you're trying to prove that you're better than the person already doing it. When you're through with that, send out copies of your art to as many people as you can. Don't just send one to Marvel Comics, one to DC, and one to Image; instead, send 10 to all of them.

I've never believed in sending samples to a submissions editor, because they don't have the power to give you work; the people who give you work are the editors of the books, and that's who you should send your samples to. I'd even aim at some of the newer editors, because they get some of the less prestigious titles, and are always far more accepting of new talent. Many hope to find a diamond in the rough.

If you don't want to do superheroes, then consider sending samples to Vertigo, Fantagraphics, Epic Comics, or some small publishing company that suits your style. If you like illustrating Metallica album covers, then don't send your samples to the editor of the Superman titles.

You don't need to do more than four pages of art, because looking at artwork is like looking at cars or furniture: you don't need to see every page to know if it's good. Editors can tell whether you have talent from only four pages.

If you want to ink your own art, pencil it first, then make copies of the pencils, ink the copies, and then make copies of the inked version. Do this because the likelihood of someone hiring you to pencil and ink your own work is minimal. If your inking is lacking, then a publisher can hire a professional to ink over your pencils.

If you want to write comics, then remember that editors want to see story plots, which are brief synopses of what the story is about. They don't want to see dialogue; they'll ask for dialogue after they become interested in the plot. The plot should be about characters published by that particular company; Marvel doesn't want a Superman story, and DC doesn't want a Spider-Man story.

Keep the plots very short. Editors have very little time to look at submissions, and if they see that they have to wade through a massive plot, it's very easy for them to push it off to the side and not read it.

I highly recommend going to comic conventions. Go to as many people as possible and get as many opinions as possible. If you're a budding writer, you're probably better off talking to professional writers; if you're an artist, talk to artists and people who deal with artwork.

Another thing: when you show samples, shut your mouth. When you open your mouth, you will only do yourself damage. Let the work do the talking for you. Nobody's going to talk me or some editor into liking a page if we don't like what we see with our own eyes. Don't say things such as, "This isn't my best work." Editors don't want to hear that. They assume that you're coming to them because you want work, and why would they want to hire someone who isn't showing them their best work?

Over the course of 14 months, I mailed out over 700 packages. I got about 280 responses, and 279 were rejections. I sat there and took all those rejections, but because I was so stubborn, I kept saying, "I'm going to break into this business come hell or high water, and nobody's going to stop me!" You have to persevere; if you can't handle rejection, then I don't recommend sending in samples, because it's a very competitive field out there right now.

Use a chart to keep track of who you've sent samples to. If you get one nonresponse, don't let that discourage you. If you get 20 rejection responses, don't let that discourage you either. It's not going to happen overnight. Keep sending work to those who responded. Even if editors say, "You need to work on that," at least they took the time to review your work and write a letter back to you.

It's better to try to form a relationship with an editor who gives you constructive criticism rather than with one who just throws your sample in the trash and doesn't offer an opinion. A good editor will consider hiring you when he sees improvement. If you improve from submission to submission, the editor will say, "Geez, this person really wants to work. He's got a good attitude and has improved. We'd better give him a job just so he doesn't send us any more mail!"

Don't be shy. If you want to get into comics, nobody's going to knock on your door—you have to knock on theirs. Having said that, I wish you the best of luck, and hope you're lucky enough to get a job, just like I was. Until next month, take care. ☆

Any industry professional who wishes to respond to the opinions stated here should write to: E.G.O., 151 Wells Ave., Congers, NY 10920-2064.

*EVERYONE'S GOT OPINIONS

The opinions expressed in this column are not necessarily those of *Wizard: The Guide to Comics*, its editorial staff, or Image Comics.

WIZARD BULLPEN

Wizard has only begun to settle into our snug new office building, but we've already had a bevy of guests from in and outside the comic industry. Some of the notables who have passed through Wizard HQ include Bart Sears (with his lovely wife Jill and assistant Sean), Joe Quesada, Jimmy Palmiotti, the ever-flamboyant Nelson, Dark Horse VP of marketing and sales Lou Bank, Extreme Studios's Matt Hawkins, and some of the big boys over at Valiant: publisher Steve Massarsky, senior VP Jon Hartz, and VP of marketing Marty Stever. They all slept over and did each other's nails, too.

***"Mortal Kombat!** Mortal Kombat!"* The chant arose earlier this month after those friendly folks over at Acclaim donated a *Mortal Kombat II* arcade game to Wizard Press (to be given away in the pages of *Wizard* #36). While playi...er, testing the game to make sure it'll be in perfect shape for the lucky fan who wins it, a *Mortal Kombat II* tournament was held by the hard-working Wizard staff. So who was the top kombatant? Though an impressive display was made by Pat "Baraka" McCallum, Doug "Johnny Cage" Goldstein, Matt "Liu Kang" Milliken and Steve "Raiden" Blackwell, the heavyweight belt went to *ER* editor and *Wizard* editorial assistant Rob "Liu Kang" Samsel. (Can you say "fatality"?) Honorable mention goes to Gareb Shamus, who entered but got his butt waxed pretty hard. (Sorry, boss.)

Seeing as how the Wizard Press staff was working their fingers to the bone (let's see *you* try to execute all those crazy moves in *Mortal Kombat II*. It ain't as easy as it looks!), editorial assistant Jennifer Winheim opened up her house for quite a rollicking party. Many a Wizard staffer showed up for the festivity, and even Nelson stopped by to hang with the crew (geez, this guy is everywhere!). Special events during the night included Marc "Crazy Legs" Wilkofsky dancing like a kitten in a microwave and *ER* art director Robin Ramos astounding partygoers with his prowess on the keyboards. A blast was had by all.

UP CLOSE...

Patrick McCallum
Editor, *Wizard: The Guide To Comics*

ILLUSTRATION BY BRIAN CUNNINGHAM

What is it you do at *Wizard*?
I edit *Wizard*, choose what goes on the cover, decide what feature editorial we run, come up with a bunch of the contests, and do Gareb's lawn.

Your favorite section in *Wizard*?
Magic Words.

Last good movie you saw?
The Remains of the Day.

Last good book you read?
Howard Stern: Private Parts.

Favorite TV show?
The Late Show, with David Letterman.

Favorite musical group?
Queen.

Who would play you in a movie?
An older Fred Savage.

Favorite comic right now?
Prime.

Favorite comics of all time?
Amazing Spider-Man #229-#230.

What are/were your nicknames?
Tooley, Pinhead.

WIZARD TOP 10

Top 10 things Robin took with him when he left the Batcave

10. Aunt Harriet's ashes
9. Bruce Wayne's near-mint copy of *Detective #27*
8. Jason Todd's old *Playboys*
7. The kryptonite ring (just in case Superman gets steamed when Robin makes time with Lois)
6. The handbrake to Bruce Wayne's wheelchair (that'll teach him to leave Azrael in charge)
5. Alfred's medication
4. Bruce Wayne and Selina Kyle's private home video (featuring "The Bat, the Cat, and Hey, What's That?")
3. His Clearasil pads
2. The big penny
1. Bruce Wayne's bank card (P-A-R-T-Y)

❑ **THE BEGINNING OF THE VALIANT ERA** In its latest special edition, *Wizard* explores the company that's celebrating its third outstanding year in comics. This issue sports a fantastic Bernard Chang gatefold cover featuring Valiant's coolest characters, plus a Joe Quesada Dr. Silk bookmark (scabs not included). In addition, this special comes with an exclusive 32-page *Secrets of the Valiant Universe* comic. Plus: in-depth coverage of all the Valiant titles, from *Archer & Armstrong* to *X-O Manowar*. *The Beginning of the Valiant Era* is one book no comics fan should be without! **$3.95**

❑ **COLLECTOR'S SPORTSLOOK #7** "Justice is served" in this June issue when *Sportslook* puts the cover spotlight on Atlanta Braves right fielder David Justice. In addition, *CSL* takes a look at auto racing and asks, "Why is it so popular?" (After all, we know it's not a *real* sport, like lawn darts.) Plus, a sneak peek at the upcoming World Cup soccer tournament, the 100 coolest cards of all time, and...do fans expect too much from athletes? **$3.95**

❑ **ER #9** This month's issue of *Entertainment Retailing*, Wizard's trade magazine for hobby store retailers, explores Valiant's upcoming "Chaos Effect" storyline and sports an awesome "Chaos Effect" cover by Bob Layton. Other features include an Industry Spotlight on Malibu Comics President Scott Rosenberg, a guest editorial by Milestone Media's Michael Davis, coverage of the '94 Toy Fair, and insightful columns by such industry notables as John Byrne and Beau Smith, plus the chance to have Madman creator Mike Allred come to your store! Wowee zowee! **$2.95**

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WIZARD

ISSUE 35

THE GUIDE TO COMICS

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WIZARD Profile

LIANA ™ & © COLLEEN DORAN

Here's looking at...COLLEEN DORAN

Colleen Doran is in an enviable position: she splits her time between a personal project, *A Distant Soil*, and mainstream projects which she enjoys, like *Valor* and *Legionnaires*.

Doran first showed artistic promise at age 5, when she drew a Mickey Mouse Valentine's Day card for a contest and won tickets to see "Disney on Ice." She says that she only became a huge comics fan at age 12, when she was ill and her father brought her a box full of comics. She was hooked from that point on.

While at a science fiction convention, a 15-year-old Doran shopped samples of her work around and landed a job in advertising. She freelanced in science fiction illustration, and then fell into comics. Her first comics work was her *A Distant Soil* series, published by Warp Graphics. Her first mainstream work came from DC Comics in the form of 1985's *Amethyst* #12 (regular series). Doran has since worked on DC's *Who's Who* (all series), *Sandman*, *Wonder Woman*, *Legion of Super-Heroes*, and *Legionnaires*, among others, and Marvel's *Amazing Spider-Man*, *X-Factor*, an as yet unreleased sequel to *Fallen Angels*, and the recent *Captain America: Drug War*.

When Doran left Warp, many companies vied for the chance to publish her *Distant Soil* title. She went with the Donning Company, but later decided to self-publish under the banner of Aria Press. *A Distant Soil* is quickly approaching its ninth issue.

The 30-year-old Doran, born in Cincinnati, Ohio, has a full schedule this year. Besides continuing to work on *A Distant Soil*, she will continue to pencil DC's *Valor* (which will play a pivotal role in the upcoming continuity-fixing *Zero Hour: Crisis in Time* mini-series), has work in *Legion of Super-Heroes Annual* #5, is supplying art for a few of SkyBox's upcoming *Star Trek* trading cards, and is on tap for a mysterious late '94 mini-series from an undisclosed publisher. "I'm not allowed to talk about it yet," she says.

Is Doran happy with her career? "I've always wanted to be a cartoonist," she affirms. "I think the reason I got such an early start was because I knew exactly what I wanted."

First comic book read...
It had to be an Aquaman story in either *Aquaman*, *Adventure Comics*, or *Action Comics*. All I remember is that it was drawn by Nick Cardy.

Favorite comic of all time...
Uncanny X-Men #138, the funeral of the Phoenix; it was the first issue of the book I had read. What a way to start, eh?

Favorite work of your own...
Whatever issue of *A Distant Soil* I happen to be working on at the moment.

Comics you currently read...
Legionnaires, *Catwoman*, *Hellstorm*, *Sandman*, *Legion of Super-Heroes*, *Bone*, *Starchild*, *Nestrobber*, *Hepcats*, and *Wandering Star*.

Person you'd most like to meet...
One person I never got to meet was Hal Foster [creator of the *Prince Valiant* newspaper strip].

Superpower you'd most like to have...
It would be wonderful to fly; what a great sense of freedom.

Favorite munchie at 2 a.m....
Mousse truffle paté and garlic bagel chips.

Favorite toy as a kid and as an adult...
As a kid, it was this stuffed tiger that was four or five feet long. My grown-up toy is my VCR. I watch a lot of movies while I work.

Favorite pastime or hobby...
Gardening. I love it.

Favorite television show...
I watch *Lois & Clark: The New Adventures of Superman* every week. I love that show.

Last good movie you saw...
The Three Musketeers.

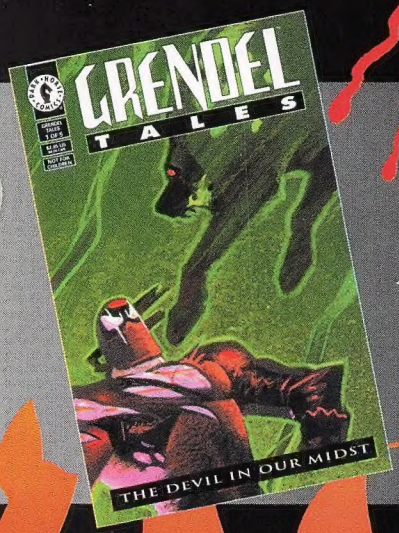
Favorite musical performer...
Jimmy Page.

Person who would play you in a movie about yourself...
Sally Field.

Person you'd most like to work with...
Frank Miller.

Why do you read *Wizard*?
To stay up to date on all the hot news. ☆

One cold day IN HELL.



When Grendel is taken in by an Antarctic ice station, the temperature hits absolute zero.

THE BODY COUNT BEGINS IN MAY!

Advisory: Suggested for mature readers.

DARK HORSE COMICS®

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SUPER™

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